

Florida WILDLIFE

APRIL, 1957

The Florida Magazine for all Sportsmen

25 CENTS

FRESH WATER
FISHING SPECIAL

GRASS FLAT BASS

SPINNING
IN FLORIDA



FLORIDA WILDLIFE'S

Fishing Citation

"for that BIG ONE that DIDN'T get away"

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All fish must be taken from the fresh waters of the state of Florida, as defined by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. Fish must be caught on conventional fly, spinning, or bait-casting tackle, with artificial or live bait, in the presence of at least one witness.

The catch must be weighed and recorded at a fishing camp or tackle store within the state by the owner, manager, or an authorized agent of the respective establishment.

Application for a Florida Wildlife Fishing Citation must be made within 10 days of the date fish was caught. Application must be made on the prescribed form as shown on this page. (Requests for additional forms should be addressed to: Florida Wildlife, Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Florida.)

Citation, showing recorded data of the catch, will be mailed to the applicant upon receipt of application form that has been properly filled out and signed.

The receipt of any and all photographs pertaining to the registered catch, including the applicant and the fish, will be appreciated by the editor for use in Florida Wildlife Magazine.

Florida Wildlife Fishing Citations are available without charge, to any and all subscribers to Florida Wildlife Magazine, and their immediate families, who catch any of the following fresh-water game fish of the prescribed size requirements:

SPECIES

LARGEMOUTH BASS

..... 8 pounds or larger

CHAIN PICKEREL

..... 4 pounds or larger

BLUEGILL (BREAM)

..... 1 pound or larger

SHELLCRACKER

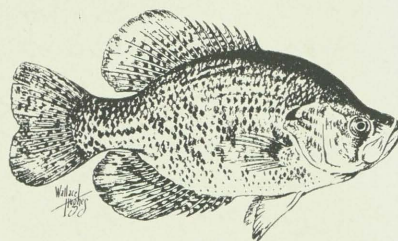
..... 2 pounds or larger

BLACK CRAPPIE

..... 2 pounds or larger

RED BREAST

..... 1 1/2 pounds or larger



CUT OUT AND SAVE THIS APPLICATION BLANK

APPLICATION FOR FLORIDA WILDLIFE FISHING CITATION

The Editor, FLORIDA WILDLIFE _____ Date _____
Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Fla.

Please send me the Florida Wildlife Fishing Citation with the inscribed data listed below:

Name _____ Address _____

Species of Fish _____ Weight _____ Length _____

Type of Tackle, Bait Used _____

Where Caught _____ Date _____

Catch Witnessed by _____

Registered, Weighed by _____ at _____

(Signature of Applicant)



Published monthly by the
FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION
Tallahassee, Florida



Dedicated to the
Conservation, Restoration, Protection of our Game and Fish



BILL HANSEN, Editor

MORRIE NAGGIAR, Associate Editor

C. L. SATTERFIELD, Circulation

CHUCK SCHILLING, Fishing Editor

EDMUND McLaurin, Gun Editor

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Box 908, Phone 1725
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P. O. Box 877, Rodeo 2-2851
Okeechobee, Florida



FLORIDA TROUT

Dear Sir:

I was fishing on Lake Talquin near Tallahassee and heard several people mention trout. I was always under the impression that the trout was not a native Florida fish. Can you explain?

Jim Blodgett
Raleigh, N. C.

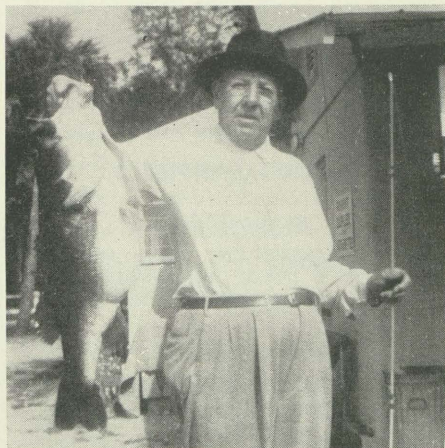
● Many native anglers of the southeast refer to the largemouth bass as trout or it is possible that they were referring to the salt water species, speckled trout or spotted sea trout. Members of the fresh water trout family are definitely not found in Florida.

LARGE LARGE-MOUTH

Dear Sir:

Am enclosing check for FLORIDA WILDLIFE for one year.

Also am enclosing application for Fishing Citation for Mr. M. H. Liles of Macon, Georgia and the picture of his 13½-lb. largemouth bass caught on live shiner January 28, 1957 in the Homosassa River, opposite our dock with Joe Byrd as guide.



Mr. Liles remarked he had fished 25 years for this one.

Within the last 5 days we have had several caught weighing from 5 lbs. to 9½ lbs., but this 13½-lb. beauty has really made history.

Mrs. Fred Faris
Homosassa Springs, Fla.

LONG TIME READERS

Gentlemen:

I have been a reader of your magazine for

a long time and enjoy it very much. I think it is one of the better magazines of its kind in the country.

I wish you would have more articles about duck hunting in Florida. Enclosed is my check for another year's subscription to a great magazine.

Jerry Miller
Mulberry, Fla.

Dear Sir:

Please enter my subscription to FLORIDA WILDLIFE. I was a subscriber in the past and enjoyed the magazine very much. I am from Pensacola, Florida, so you can see it helps me to keep up with things in my home state.

Frank P. Schiller
Garfield, New Jersey

CONSERVATION

Gentlemen:

Congratulations on your National Wildlife Week article in the March issue of FLORIDA WILDLIFE.

I have long been interested in the conservation of our natural resources and hope that through such organizations as the Wildlife Federation and the State and federal commissions, we will be able to save our wildlife so that our children and their children can enjoy it as we do now.

Dr. A. S. Goldberg
Passaic, N. J.

NEW FLORIDIAN

The Editor:

As a new resident of Florida, I want to say a few words on how much your magazine has helped us enjoy our new life. Coming from the far north, we were not very familiar with the fish and animals of Florida, but through FLORIDA WILDLIFE we have been able to identify almost everything we see.

Please have more stories on birds as there are so many down here and we would like to know what each one is.

Ralph Reamer
St. Petersburg, Florida

FISHING GOOD—HUNTING?

Gentlemen:

Enclosed is a check for a three-year subscription to FLORIDA WILDLIFE and some extra money for as many back copies as you can send me.

Although I have been coming to Florida for many years, I first found out about your magazine while in Leesburg in January. The fishing is the best in the country in Florida but I will do my hunting in Michigan. I spent all kinds of money for licenses this year but shot only a few squirrels and ducks. There just didn't seem to be enough places to hunt in Central Florida.

Robert Horton
Chicago, Illinois

FIRST HUNT

Gentlemen:

My name is Jimmy Jones. My age is 11. I'm writing to see if you will put my experience in your magazine as my daddy is a subscriber. It was my first year of deer hunting and also my first time to use a shotgun. My daddy gave me a gun for this season's deer hunting. The third day of my hunting, along about sundown, I heard the dogs coming so I stood there waiting—so nervous.



Then a nice 7-point buck comes close. I aimed until he got within 16 steps so I shot and killed him. Was I thrilled. Then the next morning—next to the last day of season—about 8:30 I got to shoot a big spike, shot him in 45 steps. I was using a 12 gauge single barrel shotgun. My dad is a good hunter. He has killed several deer. We hunt on the Eglin Reservation.

My deer were killed on December 30 and 31st. I look forward to receiving FLORIDA WILDLIFE and enjoy reading it every month.

Jimmy Jones
Opp, Alabama

JUNIOR CONSERVATIONIST

By DENVER STE. CLAIRE

IN THE March Issue of the FLORIDA WILDLIFE MAGAZINE, I was unable to present the name of the Outstanding Junior Conservationist of the Year because we were still compiling points. The title this year goes to young man who has extended a most worthwhile effort toward resource education. He has spoken to many school classes and to women's clubs and has just recently been named State Junior Chairman for National Wildlife Week in Florida. He is a member of the Allapattah Junior Conservation Club of Miami and holds the office of Secretary for this club. He is also editor of the Claw Bulletin. His name, Lloyd Johnson. Lloyd accumulated a total of 97,530 points during the year of 1956. Congratulations, Lloyd Johnson, for your initiative and ambition.

Presentation of awards will be made this summer during the Delegates Week, June 9-15.

Runner up to this young man is David Laird, of the Deane Mather Junior Wildlife Club of Ocala. David compiled 48,910 points during the year of 1956. He was formerly Secretary of his club, and now holds the rank of Junior Director. He is also filling out the unexpired term of Secretary of the Youth Conservation Club League.

Both of these young men are leaders and will contribute a great deal to resource education in later years.

Congratulations to you both, and to all of you who have been working so hard on your conservation projects for your club, your community, your state, and yourself. Remember, your points are accumulative from the very time you start your project work.

Lloyd Johnson is the first young conservationist in the State to attain the rank of Junior Wildlife Officer by the accumulation of merit points. His total for the years of 1955-56 is 102,530 points.

Phillip Alexander, past president of the League and past president of the Attapattah Optimist Junior Conservation Club, now serving as an ex-officio member of the League, received the honorary title in 1955 for

his selection as the Outstanding Young American in Florida.

The rank is presented to the individual who has compiled 100,000 points and reached the age of 16 years. I understand Lloyd Johnson will be 16 in May, and this title will be conferred upon him during the summer encampment.

Congratulations to you, Lloyd, and to your sponsor, the Miami Optimist Club for their efforts and understanding of both natural resources and human resources. And a special "thank you" here to Dade Thornton who has inspired many of these young boys toward greater efforts.

* * * * *

Our office is very busy these days. We are arranging a program for the schools throughout the State. Letters have been sent out to all of the Superintendents of Public Instruction requesting their permission to show our film, "Sportsmen of Tomorrow," with a short talk, and to be allowed to leave applications for summer camp.

Many letters are coming into our office telling of the schools' interest in our resource education program, and asking that we show the film at

their school. Those of you who are attending some of these schools will probably be asked to talk after the film has been shown. The film has the showing time of 11 minutes. We would like to use nine minutes to discuss camp and the program, and to remind the audience that applications will be left with the teachers and in the principal's office. Now would be a good time to prepare a talk about the camp. It will also be a good time to talk to your friends about attending camp. Remember, it will be bigger and better than ever before.

While I am talking about the camp, I would like to say that for the past six weeks Mr. Kenan, our custodian, has been in charge of a crew which has cleaned a considerable amount of underbrush along the lake. All of the grounds have been improved. Mr. Kenan has also rigged something to tie our few boats to so that they won't wander around the lake.

* * * * *

THE JUNIOR EVERGLADES CONSERVATION SQUADRON announced their new officers. They are as follows:

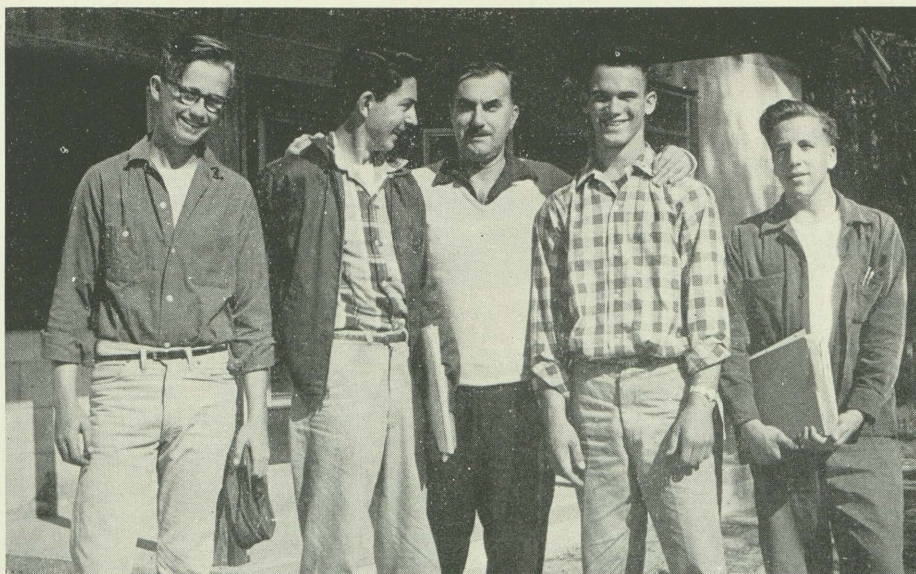
President — Eddie Chaptman
Vice President — Tom Mawhinney
Secretary — Gary White
Treasurer — Bruce Booker

* * * * *

PANAMA CITY — A new club has been organized in Panama City. This is a club for boys. This new club will be the Boys Conservation Club of Bay County. The following officers have been elected:

President — Tommy Etheridge

(Continued on Page 45)



On January 6th, the Board of Directors of the Junior Conservation Club League of Florida met at the Lake Eaton Camp in the Ocala National Forest. In the photo above, left to right, Henry Imhauser, Treasurer, Miami; Mike Davis, President, Hialeah; Denver Ste. Claire, Executive Secretary, Ocala; Jerry Hill, Vice President, Ocala; and David Laird, Secretary, Ocala.



By **CHUCK SCHILLING**



IF THAT dark cloud looming over the horizon holds only rain, it need not spoil your fishing trip. In fact, it may turn a sunny, bright day, with the action confined to the treetops, to a wet day with plenty of action on the end of your line.

Many times, I've seen fair weather fishermen scurrying for cover at the first sign of rain, while we less fragile souls stayed out in the weather to have a field day. More times than not, rainy weather will produce fine fishing, and a rain squall of short duration will sometimes produce a flurry of activity in an otherwise dull day. I've, also, learned that thunder does not necessarily ruin the fishing as is popularly supposed. I have on many occasions caught fish like mad amid thunderclaps that rocked the boat.

Why should fish bite better during the rain? Who knows — perhaps they feel safer, figuring all the anglers have gone home. Perhaps the rain dimpled water surface and the cloudy skies make the angler less visible. Perhaps they rise to the surface to grab off a drink of high oxygen content rain water or to enjoy

its coolness. Whatever the reason, cloudy, rainy weather often spells good fishing. Heck, I even GO fishing in the rain.

RESTRICTED WATERS:

With more and more people using our dwindling water for recreational purposes (some of which are not compatible), we have a problem of individual and personal rights to solve. The glaring example of this is the water speed demon who tears the surface apart with his passing, as compared to the fisherman who needs and demands undisturbed water and quiet. The fisherman claims prior rights, but the speedster makes a lot more noise.

This would be no problem at all if everyone concerned would be courteous, considerate, and a little tolerant; but human nature changes slowly if at all. I doubt if this particular hurdle will be cleared without official action of some kind.

Florida is not alone with this headache. The more populous northern states, many of whom have far less water, are already taking action. This action is restricting certain waters for specific uses.

In Michigan, some trout streams have been restricted to the use of the fly rod and the dry fly only. Some of the New England States, also, set aside certain waters for this purpose. Many other states, particularly in the west, are doing likewise. Some states have limits to the size of motors that can be used on certain waters.

This latter seems a logical development to me. It has been my observation that aquatic speed demons pursue their ways principally to compete against each other or time standards, or to display their accomplishments to the world at large. It seems to me, they could do this best if they were all on one body of water.

At present, 10 speed boat enthusiasts can and do upset the emotional balance on 10 bodies of water. Why not put all 10 of the racers on one lake or river, where they can amuse themselves passing and waving at each other? As it is now, it seems that each body of water has at least one racer — and one is enough.

ROCKING THE BOAT:

One of the repeated themes in outdoor literature is the "don't stand up in the boat" warning. Hardly a month goes by without some safety expert breaking into print, warning fishermen not to stand up in their boats. Some of these experts grudgingly concede that one fisherman in the boat can stand if the other sits perfectly still — well, thanks for small favors.

I can't imagine how these old saws get started. Another is the advice to fly fishermen to cast, holding a book between elbow and body. These are pure malarkey.

All my life, I've been standing up in boats. All my friends stand up in boats. Practically everyone I know stands up in boats, and I'll wager the writers who sound the warnings also stand up in boats.

I've never known an expert fisherman or fishing guide who didn't stand up in the boat. In the Florida Keys, some of the world's best light tackle fishermen and fishing guides not only stand up in their small boats but stand all over the decks,



Proper rain clothes are all that's necessary in Florida's mild climate to turn a rainy day into a wonderful fishing prospect.

seats, and gunwales. I've never heard of anyone falling overboard. It has probably happened a time or two, but then what?

In the northern woods, the white and Indian guides stand up in fishing canoes even while running rough water. They stand up while poling their canoes upstream in swift currents. They often do this dressed for cold weather, when a fall overboard would be serious indeed.

Every normal human comes equipped with built in devices that tell him whether or not it's safe to stand up in a boat, ride a horse, walk a log, or do any one of a thousand other things that require a sense of balance. Our No. 1 basic fear is of falling. If we find ourselves in a position where our sense of balance begins to fail, we become afraid. If this happens in a boat, we sit down — that is, unless we are foolish. No one has yet devised a way to protect people from their own foolishness. Even sitting down, they can mistake the iodine for the suntan lotion.

Most people who fish are perfectly safe to stand up in their boats even in rough water. When they become afraid of falling, they sit down. What's wrong with that?

OUR GLASS JAW:

A boxer is said to have a glass jaw if he is easily rendered unconscious by a blow to that part of his anatomy. Such a jaw is considered a liability in the trade.

The glass jaw of the fishing tackle world is the misconceptions the average fisherman has about his fishing rods. These are made of glass.

In 1947, not enough glass rods were manufactured to rate a mention in a tabulation of the industry. In that same year, 954,000 wood and bamboo and 2,895,000 metal fishing rods were produced. Seven years later, in 1954, the same industry produced 5,831,000 fishing rods. 5,584,000 of these were glass, with 166,000 metal and 81,000 bamboo rods making up the difference. Today, 3 years later, the production of metal and bamboo has fallen off to an even greater degree.

Such popularity must be deserved. Glass is wonderful. It is by far the best all-round material ever produced for fishing rods. What's more, it has put fine fishing rods in a price class that makes them available to all. The advent of glass did, however, bring headaches as well as cheers.

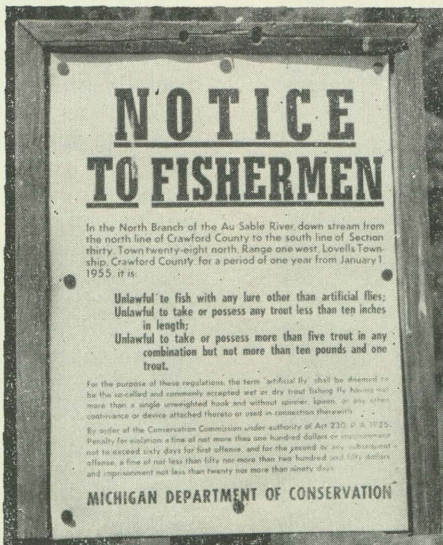
Early promotion, advertising, and pricing are largely responsible for many ills that plague the glass rod today. Let us review a few of the more popular misconceptions about glass fishing rods. Theoretically, it would be possible to make a glass fishing rod that was "unbreakable,"

but such a rod would either be so stiff and heavy it had no action or so soft it had no backbone. In any case, it would be useless for fishing. A glass fishing rod must be somewhere between these two extremes to be practical.

The fisherman would like a rod to be light as a feather, durable as steel, have the action of the finest bamboo, while costing pin money. Such a rod is impossible to produce at this time. Wonderful as glass rods are, they



Why not stand up? Macy Parkman stands on the casting deck of my boat to lay out a long fly line. Parkman says when he starts falling out of boats, he'll take up chess for a hobby.



This sign is on the north branch of the famous Au Sable River in northern Michigan. It says, "Dry fly only." Such restrictions will probably increase, perhaps in Florida.

will still break. They require care and consideration like any other light tool that is called upon to do a tremendously difficult job. They deserve this care.

It's a mistake to think that "glass is glass" and not give careful consideration to your selection of a rod. Quality, workmanship, action, durability, and integrity differ among various manufacturers. You still get just about what you pay for, but it's quite possible to pay for a lot you don't get. It pays to be careful.

Early glass rods that carried a "Guaranteed Forever" warranty did so with tongue in cheek. In spite of all their wonderful qualities, glass fishing rods are still delicate, fragile pieces of equipment, subject to normal wear and abuse. Even the world we live on is not guaranteed that long.

Contrary to popular belief, glass rods, and particularly hollow glass rods, are affected by moisture to an alarming degree. A glass rod is made of glass fibers held together by a synthetic resin or glue. The rod's strength lies in the efficiency of this bonding.

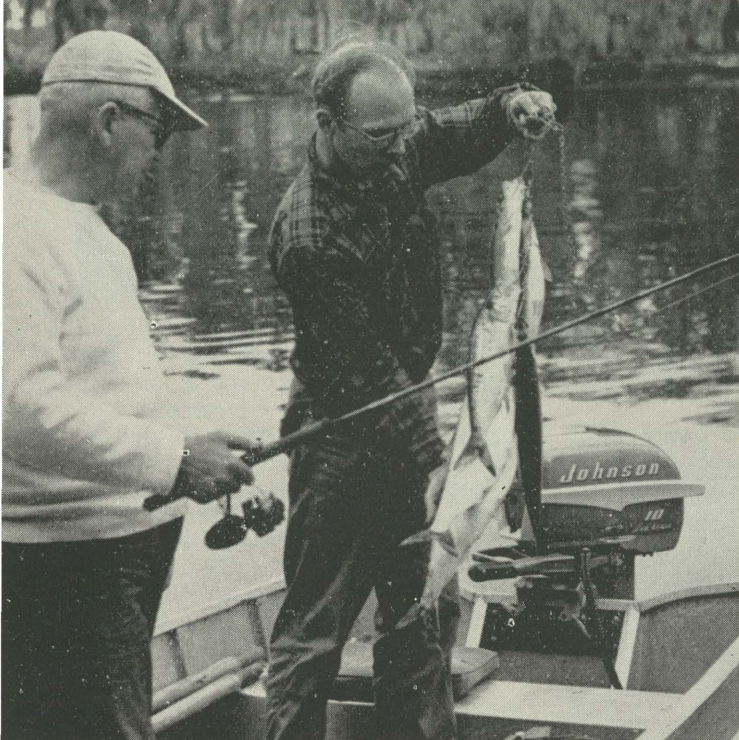
Moisture attacks a hollow glass rod in many ways. It enters the glass wall thru cracks, bruises, and scratches on the rod's surface. It collects under guide wrappings to attack the glass, and it enters the tip section thru the tiptop to weaken the rod at its most vulnerable point. Moisture attacks the glass rod at the ferrules, under the cork handle at the butt section, and thru the reel seat.

There are safeguards and precautions you can take to prevent this moisture damage. Keep your rod varnished. If your hollow glass rod isn't plugged with cork to keep out moisture in the blank ends, then plug it. Some, but not all, manufacturers plug their hollow glass blanks for this reason. If you do the job yourself, use cork, as wood plugs will swell and crack the glass.

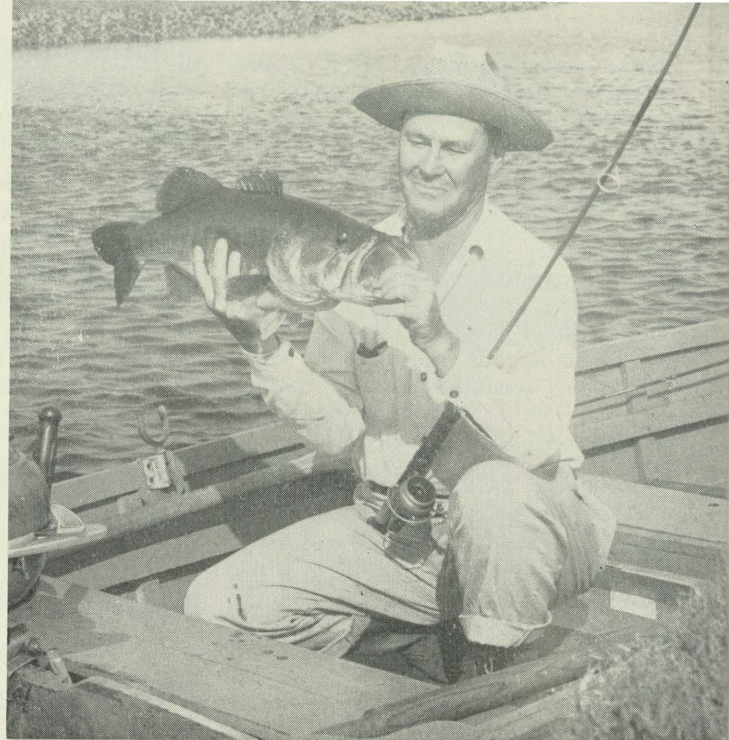
Keep your cork grip and reel seat in good repair. A little varnish around the reel seat and wind check will do wonders to keep out moisture. It hardly seems necessary to warn about storing your rod in a damp place or unnecessarily exposing it to the elements. Much rod breakage can be traced to moisture damage to the glass. If you want to use a favorite glass rod for a long time, keep it dry inside and out.

Vibration is another little recognized enemy of the glass rod. If you transport your rod in holders on your car top, or if you make long

(Continued on Page 39)



Shad really demonstrate the points in favor of spinning . . . casting light lures great distances . . . giving the fish a chance to perform, light enough to hold them yet just right for those weak mouths.



Don Southwell with a whopper taken on his ultra light spinning gear. I've fished with Don a lot, and have never seen him even carry a bait casting rig.

Spinning in Florida

By RAY OVINGTON

Spinning has revolutionized fishing tackle requirements and fishing techniques all over the country. Here is the low-down on the most drastic development in 100 years of sport fishing.

YOU READ AND HEAR a lot about spinning tackle these days and what a killing rig it is. Most of the stories about it are surprising until you yourself go forth to fish with a well balanced spinning rig and the correct terminal tackle and lures for the type of fishing to be done. You'll be a lot better off than with the conventional bait casting outfit for many reasons. Lighter lures can be used, lighter line and rod are employed and with the happy end result of not only more fish, but more and sportier fishing pleasure. You'll be able to cast further with no fears of backlash. You have interchangeable spools for use with various weight lures and fishing conditions. With most of the lighter rods, you can cast light bass plugs if the choice comes up to change over from the heavier stuff. If you are a beginner at fishing, you can learn to cast a spinning outfit in a matter of minutes. If you are a seasoned angler, your chances of taking a better number of fish, especially bigger ones, becomes readily apparent.

Contrary to many opinions, spinning can be just as accurate as bait casting. Given a well balanced outfit, that is, a rod built for specific weight lures equipped with a line to get the best distance for that lure, the angler can spot cast with extreme accuracy. The big trick is in making a direct cast to the target, rather than the common type of high aerial delivery. Cast overhand and time the cast so that the lure sails straight out . . . that is all there is to it . . . simply a matter of timing the line release. Study the photographs of the reel operation and you'll see how easy it is.

I started fishing with spinning tackle over twenty-five years ago and I haven't owned a bait casting rod since. When spinning began to become popular with a few of us in the pioneering stage we all tried our darndest to pull off sensational feats with the tackle as one way to demonstrate the facility and the agility of the gear. We also wanted to show that it was possible to land very large fish with it, with comparative ease . . . larger fish than could ever be landed on conventional bait casting rigs. In this way, by proof of per-

formance, we dramatized the light tackle angle. After taking sailfish on 10 pound line, white marlin, big barracuda, muskies, bonefish and any number of big salt water gamesters with conventional small spinning gear, it became obvious that extremely light tackle would kill anything that grew in the fresh water lakes and streams of America. It may sound a bit fantastic to you, but it is possible and a lot of fun to take a four pound shad in moving water on a line testing a pound and a half . . . a 10 pound bass on the same strength of line. Brother, when you can pull that one off, you'll be a spinning addict.

Aside and apart from all of this, spinning is something much more. It is versatile and there is virtually no lure to be cast by a bait casting or fly rod that cannot be handled on balanced spinning tackle as well or much better. Armed with only one reel, the angler who possesses several spools loaded with various weight lines can handle anything on the continent and fish for it any way yet devised by man.

Light spinning gear is a sort of half way measure between bait casting and fly fishing and that's why, with a spinning rod you have almost fly rod action, fly rod resiliency, fly rod length and power coupled with bait rod facility.

Today you have a tremendously wide choice of brands and styles of rods, reels, lines and terminal tackle. It is so great as to almost bewilder the first time shopper. As usual, time develops good products and competition hasn't hurt a bit. At first, the foreign imports had the field, hands down, and in many cases the American manufacturers are having a hard time to surpass them in workmanship. All reels of quality have the basic requirements such as built in anti-reverse, a feature that the old style knucklebuster bait casting reel has always needed. Simply flip the lever or push the button when a fish strikes and the built in drag takes hold, leaving the handle disengaged. You can reel in, but the handle stops as the line is being

pulled out from the spool. This in itself, plus the tremendous capacity of line to be held even on the smallest spool puts spinning heads above bait casting equipment. Spinning reels work best with monofilament line and a supple line of good quality is near perfect, as it has just enough stretch, again allowing a lighter line to be used, and a line which will not become stiff and unmanageable.

Perhaps the greatest advantage of spinning is that you do not have to cast with one hand, switch over and reel in with the other. That shifting business is not only tiring, but awkward to say the least! With spinning, you cast and reel in with the same hand and reel in and play the fish with the other. To reel in you reel forward.

The reason spinning tackle is so basically simple and is as claimed . . . no possibility of backlash is that the spool itself does nothing but hold the line. It is always stationary except when the fish is pulling off line. Casting and reeling in, it remains stationary and a bale or mechanical arm slips into motion on a disc which revolves around the spool, threading the line on evenly. There goes half the work of fishing right there. You never have to worry about correct tension in reeling in for the next cast, worry about how wet the line is for fear of making a bad cast. Your troubles are over in all these headaches once and for all.

Your rod is versatility itself . . . can be used with a fly rod reel and a heavy bullet tapered line for bass bug fishing, though spinning is better. You can always use it with a bait casting reel, or for that matter with any light fresh-salt water reel which can be fitted to the handle, though, again, once you've tried spinning I believe you will never find a need such as that!

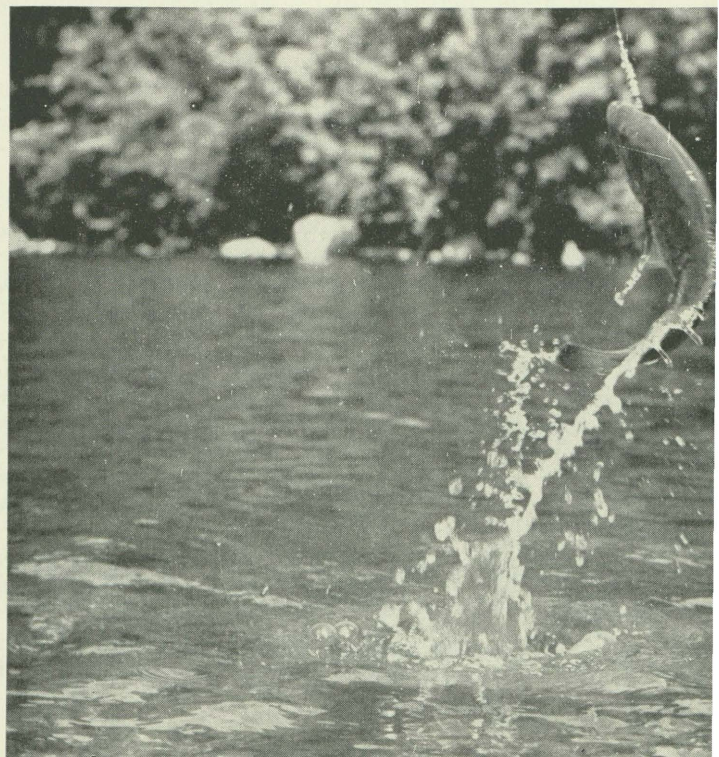
Why the large circular guides on the spinning rod? This is to accommodate the rapidly flowing line as it skims off the reel spool. With the spool at right angles

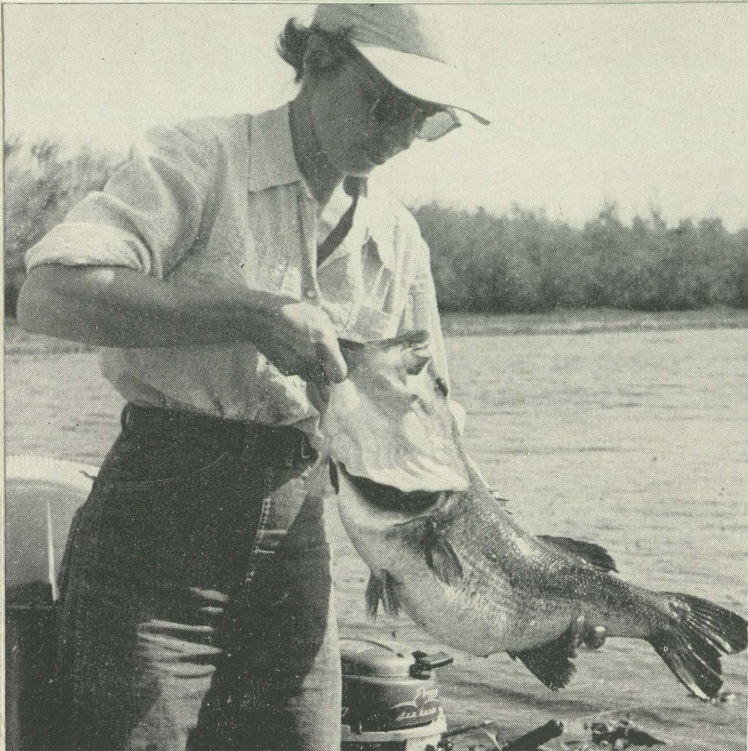
(Continued on Page 40)

In the fabulous St. Johns one never knows what is going to hit—tarpon, striped bass, black bass, mudfish, gar, perch or shad—but spinning tackle will handle 'em with margin . . . and more fun too!



And when they jump . . . the light tackle goes to work giving you fun, for it gives the fish the chance to perform . . . the light lure lets him return the battle.





Whoppers will take artificials on the grass flats. This is an early-spring fish that took a surface plug.

many of the shallows along the St. Johns River and its adjoining lakes.

A good way to find the stuff is to run around the shallows with an outboard boat. Sooner or later your motor will louse up and make a heck of a noise. When you tip it up and find the prop is clogged with eel grass, you're on a grass flat. If you don't leave now, you're apt to become an addict.

I think the artificial lure fisherman is more likely to catch a really big bass on the grass flats than anywhere else on the St. Johns system. Baitcasting tackle catches most of these big fish for reasons we'll take up later but fly fishermen and spinfishermen needn't be left out.

The first time I hooked a grass flat bass, I didn't even know what I had. I wasn't used to bass coming in those dimensions. This one rolled over by surface plug like a sleepy tarpon and swam placidly into a big patch of grass, apparently for digestive purposes. I tugged mightily and the bass pulled back politely but firmly. The plug came back to the boat festooned with two pounds of eel grass. I never even made him mad.

Once a bass swims into a clump of grass, you get some unique sensations, especially if he gets in there immediately after taking your lure. A loud estimate of his size is likely to be embarrassing in the light of subsequent events so I now make it a rule to keep my

GRASS FLAT BASS

By CHARLES WATERMAN

THE BEST CONVERSATION about grass flat bass is heard when they aren't there.

Briefly, a few of the reasons why the bass are not on the flats are as follows:

The water is too low.

The water is too high.

The weather is too hot.

The weather is too cold.

The grass is too scarce this year.

The grass is too thick this year.

The coot have eaten all the grass.

The fish are spawning.

The fish aren't ready to spawn.

There has been so much boat traffic the fish are scared off the flats.

There has been so little boat traffic the fish have not been scared onto the flats.

These are only a few reasons, of course, and I have not touched on the matters of moon phases, barometric pressure and the persistent rumors that all of the bass have been caught or killed by some foul illegal means.

After learning why they are not there, I usually shake my head sadly and sneak out just to make sure. If they're really gone, I come up with some logical scientific reasons of my own.

When the bass are on the flats it is silly to figure why because you should never look a gift bass in the mouth.

There are a lot of kinds of grass that bass hide in but I'm talking specifically about eel grass, found in

You often find submerged eel grass by picking up a wad of it with your outboard motor.



excited opinions secret until all of the returns are in.

There was the time when I was fishing with Norm Allen, a nice army guy who had never been introduced to Florida bass. We weren't doing much good. I had one of those abrupt, chugging strikes that everyone knows means a good fish. He was in the depths of a grass patch within the first three feet and I gave Norm a running commentary on his powerful surges.

"He's in the grass!" I quavered.

"I can't move him!" I screamed.

"Let's go get him," I pleaded.

Norm bent briskly to the oars and my gently throbbing line shortened until the scene of action was directly beneath the gunwale. I dug frantically for my trophy and finally came up with an immense bundle of dripping grass. Like a terrier digging in a wet haystack I finally sorted out my fish. He was ten inches long and looked disgusted.

In a case like this, it is standard operating procedure to say, "The big one got off and a little one grabbed it."

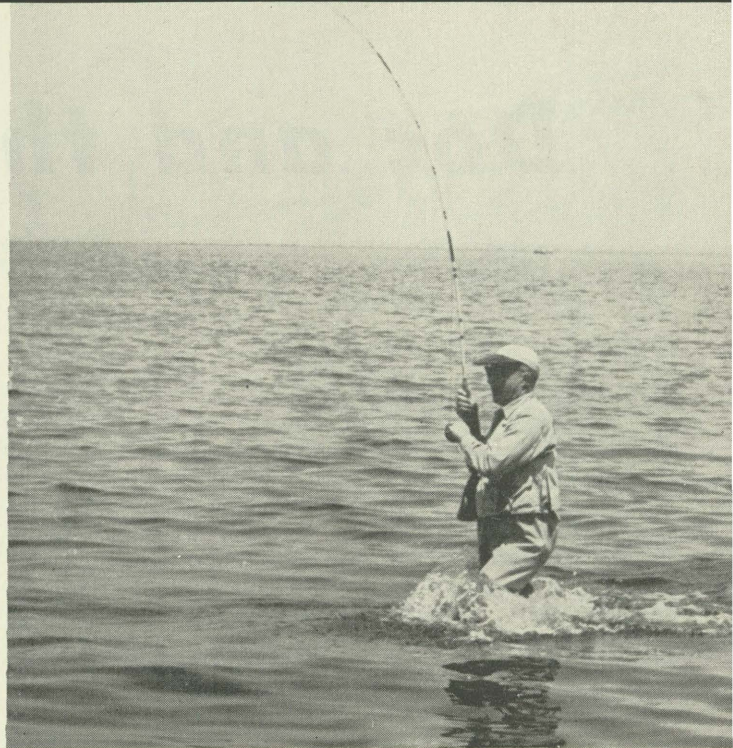
I did this but Norm maintained a frozen silence.

Grass flat fishing water ranges from a foot to four or five feet in depth. Ideal conditions find the grass tops either reaching the surface or only a few inches below it. There is some excellent wading water in Lake George, for example, but at Lake Dexter the mud is as deep as the water and a boat is the only practical way.

I have learned the fish usually prefer broken beds of grass with open lanes. Even a bass likes to get into the open now and then.

There are more bass caught on grass flats on summer evenings than any other time but most of the lunkers are caught in late winter and early spring. One kind

Typical near-surface eel grass patch. The floating plug worked around the edges is a good bet.



When a bass manages to dig himself into a patch of grass you may have to go get him. Here is the author in that kind of trouble on Lake George. Wading is the best grass flat method if the bottom is solid.

of fishing is as much fun as the other—more fish in warm weather but a heavier average when it's cool. That doesn't mean "grandma" can't be caught when it's warm and the biggest grass flat bass I ever saw struck on a summer evening.

The learned fishermen are beginning to say "grandma" instead of "grandpa" because biologists tell us the whoppers are females. Anyway, you needn't worry about taking advantage of a lady in this case.

In late winter, it is popularly believed the big ones go on the grass to bed but Dr. H. R. Wilber points out that the bottom in some of the best fishing areas is unsuitable for bass nesting. He suggests the bass may go on the flats to follow bait fish that are spawning there.

Gene Bevis, whose fishing opinions I highly respect, says the bass are "on and off" the flats the year around and my fishing indicates he is right. Gene admits there are concentrations, especially in late winter.

Selection of lures for grass flat baitcasting requires considerable experimenting. Granted, a dozen baits are enough, but it certainly doesn't pay to be pig-headed here. Today's killer is tomorrow's junk and the angler who steadfastly sticks to one favorite will have spotty fishing.

The obvious choice is a weedless, shallow-running lure and the old reliable spoon and porkrind combination is used a lot. Good as it is, it is used too much—especially in the conventional manner—and there are times when something else will produce better by ten to one. I have seen days when the best way to fish it was to race it along until it skittered on top and then slow up and let it sink a little. The strike usually came when the spoon started down. I assume the fish had watched the skittering but didn't feel like coming to the surface. When the skittering lure slowed and sank

(Continued on Page 44)

Doc and the Fish Trap

By JIM LEE

THE WARMER water flowing into the river from Cane Creek quickened the urge that was carrying the Striped Bass toward her ancestral spawning grounds. Heavy with roe, the warm water draining from the marsh reminded her that it would soon be time to release her burden of eggs, and her silvery body with delicate black stripes slipped through the water with renewed energy. Vague memories mixed with instinct told her that where the waters of the murky river churned white from boiling rapids she would mate and the urge would be satisfied. In the dark water she did not see the barrier of wire that stretched across the stream; she felt the shock and swerved to seek a route around the obstruction. Her sleek body darted to the left. She recoiled and ran into a tangle of chicken wire on the right. She was not alone in her confusion. The illegal fish trap contained many species of fish but most were Striped Bass, caught on their way to the spawning area.

The red-and-yellow Cub was only two hundred feet above the river. From the window of the plane the fish trap looked suspicious to Pilot Sullivan at first glance, and after circling for another look he was reasonably certain that the disturbance in the water would bear investigation. Old Doc, in his car half-way across the county, replied almost immediately to the blare of the radio. "Right above Cane Creek, Sully?" Sullivan pulled on the stick and the Cub climbed while he glanced at the map. "That's right, Doc, not more than fifty yards above the mouth." The plane leveled off and continued its patrol of the river while Old Doc sped down the highway toward Cane Creek.

It was well past noon when the seasoned protector arrived at the path he knew would bring him to the river bank near the place spotted by the patrol plane. He parked well off the road and eased down the path. Old Doc, for all his bulk, moved lightly in the woods; years in the outdoors had taught him the secrets of the wildlife he worked to protect could be learned by one who moves quietly. Doc loved the spring-time . . . in the fall a man has to make himself conspicuous lest some trigger-happy idiot blast away because he saw something move. In the spring Doc could afford to slip through the woods and collect his reward from the animals . . . the sound of a bird calling his mate, the sight of a doe and fawn drinking at a branch.

The path skirted a marsh and led to the river a few hundred yards from his goal. Now Doc was working. His eyes took in the tale that was told in the tracks along the muddy path. Beside the coon tracks that sprinkled the path there were the signs of five or six fishermen, all since the last rain. That was to be expected. As he drew closer to the mouth of the creek he watched the river more closely. Sure enough, the water was eddying in an odd way a few feet from the bank, and the protector's keen eye took in the baling wire tied to an overhanging tree. Then he searched the other side of the path, and soon found

a place where he could do some sitting and waiting. A glance at his watch told him that it was time to keep a date with the justice of the peace about a matter of fishing without license, so he headed back to the car.

The next morning Doc settled himself in a thicket of reeds some twenty yards from the fish trap. Perfectly concealed, he stretched out on a piece of canvas and studied the trees over the river with his binoculars. The young leaves were rosy green in the first blush of sunlight. Somewhere a mile away a rooster crowed. Doc shivered a little; the mornings were still quite cool and the warmth of his half-mile hike from the hidden car was beginning to wear off.

Doc hunched closer to the ground when he heard the approaching voices. Talking in low tones, two men carrying fishing rods followed the path on past the old warden's blind, and continued down the river. Normally Doc would have checked their licenses, but today he was after bigger game. He relaxed and continued his vigil.

Doc silently cursed the game hog who had set the trap as he walked back to the car that night. Doc cursed him for setting a trap that would catch and hold any fish of almost any size that happened to pass; he cursed him for disregarding the game and fish laws that were established for the benefit of everyone; he cursed him for wasting the fish that were spoiled by leaving them to collect for days at a time. Doc cursed him for taking valuable time that he wanted to spend preparing for the Kid's Fishing Rodeo.

Jane had breakfast ready an hour before dawn the next morning. Doc wrapped himself around a heavy meal while his wife packed a lunch. The old warden was in the blind again by sunrise, prepared for another day of watching and waiting. There was no sign that anyone had been there during the night. The morning passed slowly. A heron provided some entertainment for a moment, and later a wood chuck searched in vain for a suitable nesting hole. Two fishermen passed, this time with cane poles. Doc caressed his pipe but did not light it, for he couldn't afford to advertise himself.

He ate his lunch slowly, keeping his eyes on the river. Chances were that the game hog would not come during the middle of the day, but Doc was interested in the passing parade of birds and animals that made the river their home, and one can never tell what a game hog will do. The sun was now warm on his back, and he had to fight to stay awake. His drowsiness passed when Sullivan flew over, searing for fishermen along the river. Slim, on the other side of the river, was probably checking fishermen by boat while using his handie-talkie to maintain radio contact with the plane. A telephone conversation with the young protector the night before had alerted Slim, and he had agreed to stay away from the Cane Creek area. The rest of the afternoon passed while Old Doc studied a squirrel building its nest high in a tree.

Doc was a patient man, but his patience was nearly exhausted as the sun went out of sight and cooler breezes, dank with the smell of the river, began rustling the cane thicket. He was almost ready to give up for the day when he saw the pair coming down



the path. Close to the ground, Doc watched as they swung off the trail and walked over to the tree where the trap was tied. Backs bent, they hauled on the baling wire and pulled the trap closer to the bank. Finally the contraption was up on the muddy bank, and they began scooping the larger fish into sacks.

Doc's eyes narrowed as he saw them selecting only the larger fish, leaving the smaller ones on the bank. Some of the dead fish were swollen, but many of the smaller fish would have been useful had the poachers troubled to gather them. The veteran protector hated waste, even when the fish had been caught illegally. Keeping his temper in check, he waited until they had straightened and were preparing to heave the trap back into the river. Then he stepped from the blind and walked toward them.

They both spun around when he said quietly, "Let's leave the trap there, boys." A sheepish look on their faces showed they knew the trap was illegal and that they had been caught red-handed. Doc motioned to the smaller fish with his foot. "Put those in the sack too, they can use them at the orphanage."

He stood back while they put the fresher fish in the sack, and then watched them throw the swollen fish into the river. Then he followed them to his car, both the men panting under the burden of heavy sacks. There was a brief discussion about the time of the court trial, and then he handed them each a citation. Both of the men were young, but they had already earned a reputation in the county for getting themselves in trouble. Doc knew some of their relatives, and felt sorry for them, but had no sympathy for the violators.

The orphanage was some miles out of his way, and by the time he had left the confiscated fish and had shown the cook and some of the older boys the easiest way of cleaning them, it was nearly nine o'clock. A late supper while Jane had a cup of coffee, and then they both turned in.

The next morning he and Slim visited Cane Creek again, and half carried, half dragged the trap to Slim's car. They left it at the courthouse. Later in the day Doc stopped by and showed the county judge the trap which he would submit as evidence in the trial. The judge, an inveterate angler, had little to say but Old Doc knew that little needed to be said.

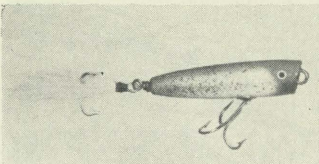
The Recorder's Court was crowded with an assortment of cases. Old Doc usually took his cases to the local justice of the peace, but more serious violations



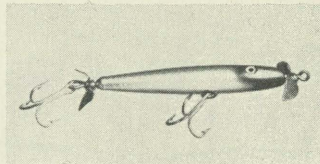
came under the jurisdiction of the higher court. The two violators were on time, clean shaven and neatly dressed. Doc acknowledged their glances with a nod of his head. When the case was called, Doc stood and repeated to the judge what he had seen after two days of patiently waiting by the river.

The men pleaded guilty. They looked expectantly at the judge as he shuffled the papers on the bench before pronouncing sentence. It was obvious to Old Doc that the men assumed they would get off lightly. There was a moment of silence as they stood stunned when the judge told them the fine would be \$250 and costs of court. One of them started to say something, but his only sound was a croak. The judge stood, then looked down at the men. "You have no reason to complain. Those fish belonged to the people of the State. You stole from the public more than just a couple of sacks of fish. You took the pleasure of catching them; you took the seed that would have been next year's crop. This court considers the game hog among the worst of thieves."

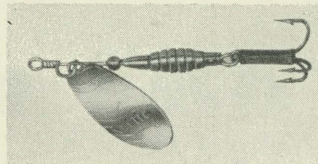
Doc wasn't particularly happy. The judge had given the violators a just fine; the men could afford to pay the fine. The old warden wasn't happy because he felt that somehow he should have been able to prevent the thing before it happened. Well, perhaps the next generation would have a better sense of fair play in taking game and fish; he hoped so as he headed his car toward the Wildlife Club pond where he was to meet with the committee on the Kid's Fishing Rodeo. Those youngsters, now, were learning to fish for sport rather than meat, and maybe they wouldn't be so greedy when they grew up . . . ●



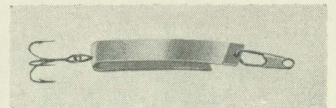
POPPER



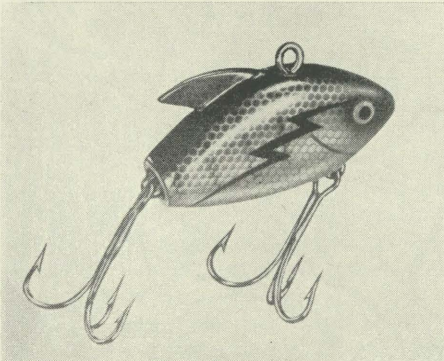
SURFACE



SPINNER



SPOON
TYPE



DEEP RUNNING

little but lethal

By EDMUND McLAURIN

“WHAT KIND OF PLUGS do you have that will catch Florida black bass,” the owner of an Ohio-licensed car recently inquired of a central Florida tackle store salesman. “I’m a bait caster.”

The salesman removed four proven black bass-getters from his display and put them on the counter for his customer’s inspection. “These are some of the current favorites,” he explained. All were *small size* lures of national brands; most Florida bass fishermen could name them correctly from only a casual glance.

The Ohio man examined each lure closely, but without comment until he had replaced the last one in its box.

“Too small!” he complained. “I’m after big bass. It takes a big lure to catch a big fish, you know . . . I’ll take that large perch finish plug and the red and white one,” he said, pointing to displayed large lures more often used for taking salt water snook, kingfish and tarpon than fresh water black bass. He paid for his purchases and left the store.

“Happens often,” the salesman told me when his customer had gone. “Folks come all the way to Florida to catch our fabulous black bass, then disregard our suggestions about proper baits and local techniques. Some, especially, labor under the delusion that only big baits catch big fish. . . . Sure, the lures I sold him will take bass, but in our heavily fished waters it’s getting to be more and more of a job to take a string of bass on over-size artificials!”

Fortunately, introduction of spin-fishing to America, and especially to Florida waters, has done much to expose the big lure-big fish fallacy. Small size, bantam-weight lures, created especially for use with thread-size monofilament line and light-action tackle, are providing the hooks that are pricking the national bubble of misconception.

Now, instead of heavy, over-size plugs, such miniature lightweights as the Eelet, Jitterbug and Spin Hula Dancer, Baby Cyclops, Super-Duper, Sonic, Baby Bomber and Bomberette, 1M and 4M series MirroLures, Johnson Silver Minnow No. 1010, Nikie, Diamond Jim, Tiny Ike, Pflueger Tandem, Royal Siren, Evans “Long Tom” popper, Jigaroo, the Met-L-fly, Upperman Bucktail, Cripple Shad, Tuttle’s Devil Bug, G-K Special, Dylite Popper, Arjon, Mepps, Rock Hopper and Porter Spin-pops, and lifelike plastic creations of natural baits

as exemplified in the Creme, Burke, DeLong, Jeff and Lange products, often produce when big bait offerings are ignored by the wiser, more wary fish in Florida waters.

Likewise, some of the old favorites—the Creek Chub Darter, Al Foss Shimmy Wiggler, Heddon River Runt Spook, Pfeffer Banana plugs and the Tony Accetta listings, to name a few—are now marketed in scaled-down-size versions and are fooling Florida fish anew.

When shad fishing is legally in season in Florida and eager anglers boom the boat livery business around Lemon Bluff on the St. Johns, near Sanford, as they seek to make the most of the upriver “runs” of this salt water species, little lures give further proof of their worth. Favorites include such well-knowns as the Boone Shad Rig, 00 Drone, Tiny Reflecto, Trix-Oreno, Met-L-fly, Nungessor and similar baits. Where the little lures are of all metal construction, those of copper and brass finishes and of wobbling actions are preferred.

A relative newcomer to Florida shad fishing is the tiny, fluorescent Shell, a lure created and commercially made by Maryland angler, Gene Newport. Its success during the 1956-57 Florida shad fishing season was both surprising and pleasant to the fortunate few who shared the half dozen or so Shells which visiting (Maryland) angler Charles S. Keefer brought with him.

Like other productive shad fishing baits, the Shell is wee size.

Latest in the legion of lures are the miniature sonics that combine lure flash and erratic action with emanating sound waves. In Lake County a total of 8,082 bass were taken from three lakes in September, 1956, on sonics alone! (The figures are substantiated by Lake County residents Tommy Anderson and Bill Brackin, who handled the tabulations.)

Grouping the new sonics in the same category as the silent baits, what do national and Florida-resident fishing experts think of the change in trend towards increasing use of small size artificials?

National expert Pete Zacheck rates the tiny No. 501 gold color Super-Duper tops for fly rod use, the larger one-sixth ounce No. 503 in the same color for spinning, and the silver No. 509S Super-Duper for bait casting.

For Florida fresh water fishing, Zacheck recom-

mends rigging the line directly to the lure with a small unswiveled snap (like the Hensen Hitch), except in the case of the fly rod sizes, where a 7 foot 3X leader is in order. Because the Super-Duper lure oscillates extremely well even at slow working speeds, and does not rotate, Pete omits adding a connecting swivel, claiming that a swivel hinders the Super-Duper's engineered action.

He says that he personally has found a four inch loop through the small snap fastener he uses permits his Super-Dupers an even wider range of acrobatics as such rigged lures will ride up and down the sides of the loop.

His fishing technique is to cast and then let his Super-Duper lure flutter to the bottom. Then he retrieves slowly and steadily without rod tip action, working the bait as close to the bottom as possible. To vary his lure presentations, Zacheck occasionally stops a started retrieve, lets his bait sink and starts retrieving anew.

Next in popularity with Pete are the Rock Hoppers, for bass fishing. In using the No. 503 gold color in the South Bend assortment of bait finishes, he has found it handy to rig each Rock Hopper with its own separate leader, to avoid cutting off and re-threading to the eyelet with each change of color pattern or depth setting. He uses the Rock Hopper's deep level setting only when trolling waters more than fifteen feet deep, when he combines the lure setting with plenty of released line and a fairly fast, steady troll thereafter.

Ed Howard, of THE FISHERMAN magazine staff, says that some of his favorite miniatures for Florida bass fishing are small black jigs or weighted bucktails, black pork eels and a combination of small eel and jig.

He fishes all three types the same way—allowing them to sink in fairly deep water and then skipping them slowly over the bottom.

Ed says that a tiny jig, and the same jig tried with a piece of eel impaled on the hook, provides somewhat faster sport than a small eel alone, as it must be treated like a fished minnow—that is, you have to let the predator fish run with it, striking when you feel the weight of the fish through line and rod.

For deep water bass fishing, Ed feels that the described lures have few equals, and that they are especially good for working up the sides of underwater banks.

John Lucas, another national authority, attributes fresh water bass fishing success to a combination of taking plenty of time and finesse to work the right plug to the right depth and then give it the right retrieve.

Unlike some of his contemporaries, Lucas feels that large Southern black bass will go for large plugs and, while an angler may catch fewer fish on large plugs, those he does catch generally will be large. However, he concedes that $\frac{3}{8}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce baits will usually take the most fish, and also confesses that some of his very best bass catches have been made on these small plugs and on lures of fly rod size.

Ed Cromer, whose fishing success is also known on a national scale, once told a group of Florida anglers that it certainly seems that fish—particularly hard-fished-for Florida bass—get educated to lures that have taken fish consistently, and may finally refuse to take such baits at all. If bass are bumping lures without getting hooked, change to a different type, Cromer urged. For example, if one is fishing with an underwater lure and fish are bumping it but not getting hooked, change to a surface-working lure and give it a different retrieve action than the ones first tried. Inversely, if surface fishing proves unproductive of strikes, first change method or speed of retrieve, fishing



Florida fishermen are learning that miniature, lightweight lures often produce when big bait offerings are pointedly ignored by wise and wary fish. Angler F. B. Van Dusen and companion, Bill Peters, of St. Petersburg, prepare to boat an almost exhausted bass that a tiny jig fooled into striking.

the baits slow, medium and fast. If no strikes occur, then change to deeper working lures.

Dick Wolff, Charles Garcia Company's energetic public relations man, likes spin-fishing with small, ultra-light lures and almost invisible, fine .0004 diameter Platyl monofilament line. He particularly likes fast-water fishing and suggests a technique for Florida anglers fishing fast-water streams.

His method is to stand in the strong flow of a stream current that has just passed between two large obstructions, such as submerged tree trunks, and cast his miniature lures upstream. When his selected lure hits the water, Dick starts the fastest retrieve he can manage. This is necessary, he says, because the lure must move faster than the swift current or there will be no lure action.

Dick points out that an angler may not get his usual casting distance using small, ultra-light lures but that casts of 25 or 30 feet will be quite satisfactory: It is more important to place a cast lure in a promising area than it is to get maximum distance, the tackle expert emphasizes. After one area of water has been diligently fished, the angler should gradually move upstream to other likely spots.

Miniature lures flashing downstream undoubtedly resemble bright bait fish, Dick believes. He calls attention to the fact that when a bait fish is frightened in fast water he never swims sideways but darts directly downstream for the fastest get-away possible. Therefore, anglers who disregard natural bait characteristics and cast a lure across a swift-moving stream are not really imitating a natural piece of fish food.

Wolff's suggested technique is at least worth trying the next time you are fishing fast water, especially since it has resulted in his hooking and landing more fish than rivals fishing the same streams with live bait.

Piscatorially-famous—but modest—Phil Francis, who makes his home at Clewiston and fishes Lake

(Continued on Next Page)



The introduction of spin fishing, with its variety of midget lures has brought about a change in the thinking of most anglers who formerly went by the "large lures for large bass" theory. The mighty midgets often produce when big bait offerings are ignored by the wiser, more wary fish in Florida waters.

(Continued from Preceding Page)

Okeechobee's waters just about as often as anyone, likes a size 14 bivisible fly for bluegill fishing, and finds a size 8 brown and white bucktail productive when he fishes brackish backwaters for baby tarpon.

Among the small size spinning lures, Phil says he likes a No. 1 Upperman bucktail with the hair singed short, so that it extends no more than one inch past the end of the hook. Burning, Phil explains, gives the hair a natural rather than a snipped-off look. Also in the spinning group of true miniatures, Phil reports good results using 1/5 ounce River Runt and Tiny Torpedo lures and the Porter Spin-pop. He failed to mention specific color combinations, evidently intending that the angler should wisely match lure colors to existing local water conditions.

Among small lures in the bait casting class, Phil again prefers the Upperman Bucktails burned short, in sizes 1/0 and 2/0, the 1/4 ounce Darters of Creek Chub manufacture, 1/4 ounce MirroLures and the Uncle Josh Pork Frog.

FLORIDA WILDLIFE's Fishing Editor, genial Chuck Schilling, goes along with the logic of including a selection of small size lures in the tackle box and of giving them plenty of active time. His views are best quoted verbatim:

"The theory that only big baits catch big fish is, in my opinion, without foundation.

"Examine the stomach contents of a few Florida bass and bream, and you'll find a predominance of tiny tidbits. Bass, for instance, are accustomed to taking their bill of fare in small portions without hesitation, and this fact makes for success when one uses small lures. Except during breeding time, when bass often strike big plugs in sheer resentment of strange objects, these fish, when feeding, generally approach any large bait or lure with extreme caution, and the larger the bait the more caution. It's been years since I've used anything but the smallest of lures for my own fishing. I have three favorites for fly fishing, spin-casting and

bait casting. Let me name and describe them:

"The Florida Leggy Bug, available in two fly rod sizes, is excellent for bass and bream. It is available in six color patterns, of which I prefer yellow, brown and frog best and in that order.

"The Leggy Bug lures have plenty of fish appeal, cast easily, ride high and pick up cleanly and, most important of all, have really sharp hooks set at just the right angle.

"In my bait casting, I use a No. T916 Spin-i-Diddee in Silver Flash, Orlando Shiner and Florida Frog, in that preferred order. This is a floating lure with two treble hooks and spinners fore and aft, and weighs only 1/4 ounce. I use it with 6-lb. monofilament and tie it directly to the line without leader or snap, and fish it very slowly.

"Top water spinner lures should not churn the water like egg beaters, but should have such slow retrieve action that spinners barely revolve. Their proper use will often spell the difference between fishing failure and success.

"My favorite spinning lure is also my all-time favorite lure—the Super-Duper. Although available in nine sizes, for my fresh water fishing I stick to the 1/6 ounce No. 503 and the 1/4 ounce No. 506. My favorite finish is the non-tarnishable 24-carat gold plate, with chrome and silver flash finishes seeing action of occasion.

"On 4 or 6-lb. monofilament tie lures directly to the line, then fish the Super-Duper of choice deep and slow—slow—slow—with no rod action.

"I always recommend casting and retrieving a Super-Duper lure for the first time in clear water, to study the lure's motion until you learn the speed of retrieve that produces the maximum side action. For example, when worked slowly enough, a Super-Duper lure will flutter from side to side on a 12 to 14 inch arc and in a manner most attractive to game fish.

"I use the 1/6 and 1/4 ounce sizes as fishing conditions indicate, but not necessarily the small one for bream and the large one for bass. I've found that bream sometimes prefer the 1/4 ounce lure and I've caught some of my largest Florida bass on the tiny No. 503. If I could have but one spinning bait in my tackle box, the Super-Duper would be it."

Ray Stephens, former Florida State 5/8 Ounce Lure Class Distance Champion and current Spinning Lure Accuracy Champion, favors the miniature Sonics, the Shimmy Wiggler with pork rind, small Johnson Silver Minnow and Clarke spoons, and the small size listings among the Russellure and Darter baits, for his Florida black bass fishing. He also likes the Mepps French Spinner and similar baits.

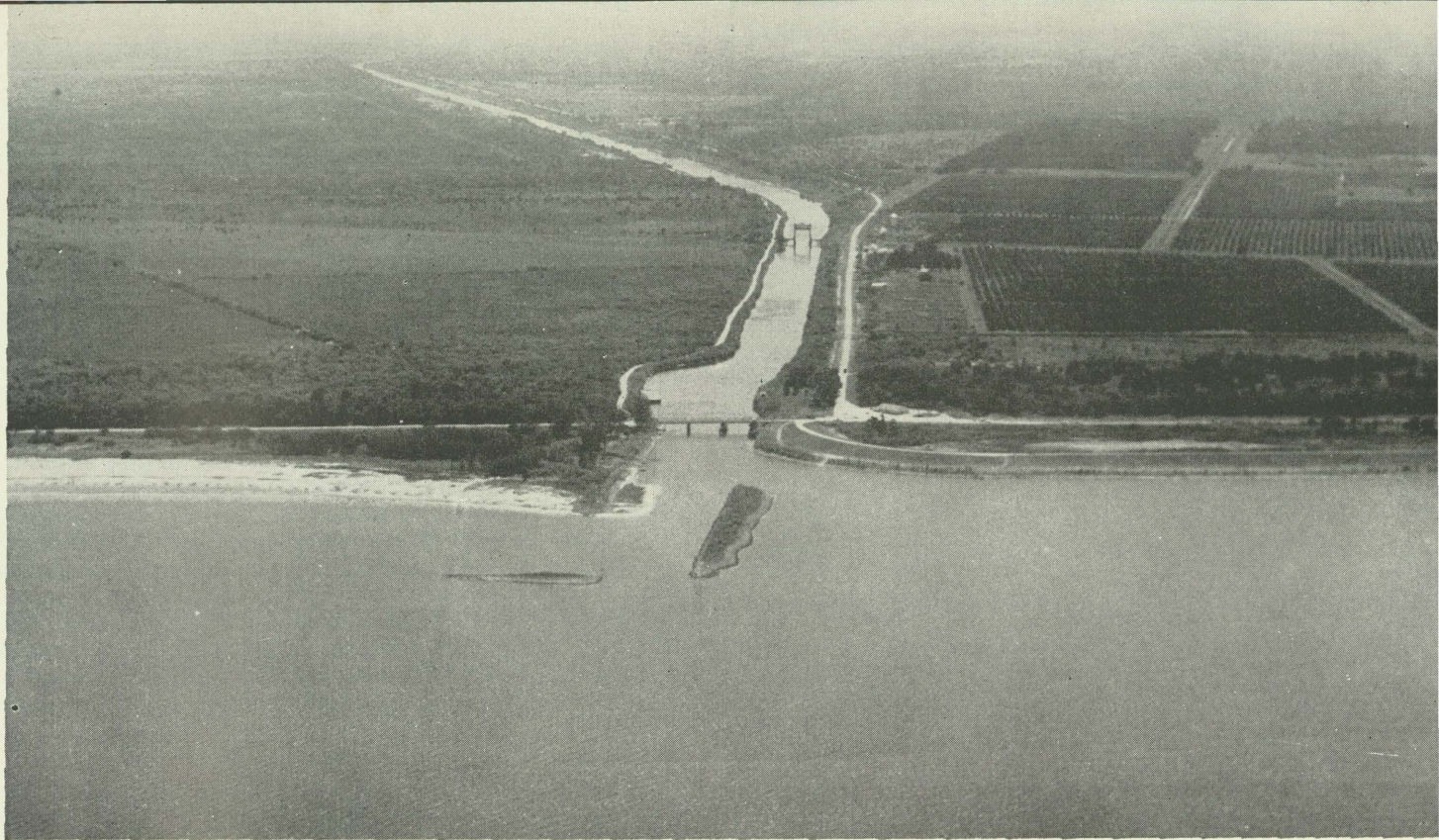
For panfish, Ray finds small nymph-type streamer flies good, along with small Bumble Bee poppers, fitted with hooks of 6-10 size.

He dispenses with snaps and swivels, fastening lures direct to monofilament leaders.

Tommy Anderson, fishing sage of Eustis, expresses a preference for small sized No. 320GM Crazy Crawler, Sonic, 360BF Torpedo and Spin-i-Diddee when fishing seriously for black bass.

When he combines bass fishing with in-season speckled perch fishing, he likes to troll or cast the smallest model of the Heddon River Runt Spook, the South Bend Rock Hopper and the miniature L&S MirroLures.

Whatever your present fishing luck, it would be wise to try some of the new small size lures, especially when angling in heavily fished waters. For many they are already proving to be little but lethal. ●



St. Lucie Canal entering Lake Okeechobee at Port Mayaca.

That Mixed-Up St. Lucie Canal

By ERNEST LYONS

SCHOOLS OF BASS and speckled perch were whipping the surface to a froth on that memorable afternoon more than thirty years ago when my Dad and I launched a skiff and outboard at the makeshift Indiantown ferry landing.

Loaded with camping gear for two weeks, rods, guns and my Walker foxhound, Jack, our intent was to use the new St. Lucie Canal merely as a means to the end of reaching the hunting grounds of the Ridge, a primeval cabbage palm and cypress hammock which rimmed-off Lake Okeechobee's east shore from vast saw grass marshes.

Giant dredges had clawed their way in a dozen miles from Okeechobee, still had as far to go to reach the lock site nine miles west of Stuart where this black water would eventually tumble down to sea; it had never dawned on us that this raw, uncompleted, man-made channel could be full of game fish from its very beginning. The reason was simple. The channel had cut the throats of swamps that had existed since time before man. Down from the dying marshes came billions of Everglades minnows, crawfish and other delightful tidbits. In from the virgin vastness of Lake Okeechobee came the hordes of specks and bigmouths to fatten on the feast.

Never before or ever since have I seen such a concentration of game fish in sweet water. If there could be a freshwater fisherman's heaven, this was it—with largemouths and perch putting on a show like mackerel or blues at sea. We pitched camp at once on a sandbar

and for two glorious days tossed every lure in our boxes at those rampaging strikers. Until it palled.

Let's say that my first memory of that mixed-up St. Lucie Canal is that it is the only body of water on which I can ever recall yawning in boredom at feeding bass and pleading with my Old Man to put aside his flyrod "and let's get going where there's something interesting." Even more amazing, if you knew him, was the fact that he agreed.

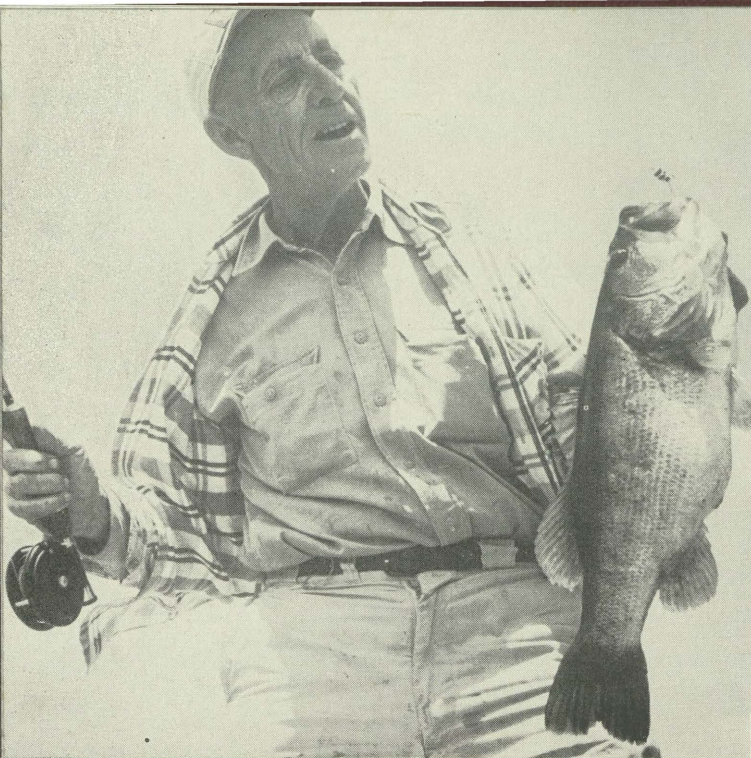
Today a twenty-five mile section of the Cross-State Waterway, linking the Atlantic with the Gulf of Mexico via Lake Okeechobee and the Caloosahatchee, this canal which broke the rules by having more fish in it before completion than ever since remains, in my opinion, one of the very best freshwater fishing grounds in Florida.

Thousands of shrimpers, tugs, houseboats, and in-board and outboard cruisers use its link in the 148-mile trans-state route to save 400 miles around Cape Sable; boatmen from all over the nation are acquainted with it as a leg in the Kissimmee to Stuart Boat-A-Cade.

And yet its fishing is practically untouched!

In a way I don't mind that. The maniacal obsession for speed which has taken over America's boating industry today is, to my mind, a marvelous conservation asset. They may have rods in their streamlined boats designed and painted to look like 1957 fin-tailed cars, and there may be tackle boxes alongside those 30-horsepower outboards, but I see darned few bass, bream or

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Seven pounders like this one landed by Bill Abbott are about tops for St. Lucie Canal bass.

(Continued from Preceding Page)

catfish on the stringers when these hurry-wagons are unloaded.

They zip past the best fishing spots on the theory that no place can be any good unless you go at least 25 miles an hour to reach it. There must be some reason why these crazy goofs behave as they do, but it surely isn't fishing.

As a classic example, my friend Bill Abbott and I were in his old-fashioned wooden rowboat drifting along casting popping bugs against a boulder-studded shoreline a few weeks ago when each of us connected simultaneously with nice bass. To the east a plume of bow-spray and the roaring whine of double outboard propulsion announced a visitor. Now, get this: each of us was fighting a fish, with bowed flyrods raised high, left hands stripping down line, that moment of truth in angling which should be obvious to the veriest tyro—and yet one of those saps yelled as they jetted by: "How's fishing?"

Their wake nearly capsized us since neither Bill nor I could get at the oars to face the bow into it. We were both thrown off balance. I landed a clean-green, black mottle-striped three pounder. A few minutes later Bill slipped the net under a four-pounder. We added them to five already in the live box.

"How's fishing?" asked Bill, cranking up his old-fashioned 3-h.p. outboard. "If this dratted egg-beater would go 40 miles per hour darned if I wouldn't catch up with them and tell them."

"And I would be glad to hit them on the head with an oar for them to stay still long enough for you to tell them," I supplied, which he agreed would be the only way we would ever get the message across.

That mixed-up St. Lucie Canal offers infinite variety for the versatile fisherman. In the years that have passed since Dad and I lucked into that amazing finny saturnalia, its fish population has evened-off, been joined by many migrants from salt water and it is unpredictable whether you will hook a pickerel, a snook or a bass when you toss a lure in front of one of its spillways, but the predictable is this: **the man with the**

know-how can always catch fish.

On hot summer days when not even a bream pops? Yes. When a blue norther is whistling down and you're smart to stick an opened newspaper under your shirt to keep warm? Yes. During extended drought when the rock walls of its cut are exposed? Yes. During floods when it is coffee and cream colored, carrying the silt burden of caved-in banks? Yes.

The angler who will take time to explore it, to patiently acquire the know-how and to be versatile in the bargain, will find that there is never a day when he can't have a barrel of fun.

For locked-off fresh water, it has an amazing variety of species. Gaining entrance when boats are lifted at the east locks, snook, tarpon, needlefish, mullet, croakers, white muttonfish and mangrove snappers mingle with bass, pickerel, specks, bream, gars, mudfish and every variety of freshwater catfish native to South Florida. Big, "eating size" eels, three feet long, lurk in the rocky crannies and under the pilings of three highway and two railway bridges. There are concentrations of toothsome shell-crackers, that delight of the worm fisherman. Occasionally the caster will connect with a sleeper, locally called "Chinese pike," which looks like a cross between a wall-eye and a lizard fish of the salt waters. Workers at the Arundel Shops, draining a giant dry-dock for dredges, had a king-sized release job on their hands when two huge manatees were trapped in the installation.

As readers of FLORIDA WILDLIFE will recall from an article published several months ago, this fresh water is the scene of an annual December run of roe mullet from Lake Okeechobee to the sea so tremendous that the schools must be locked through for days to prevent them from smothering. These concentrations are so dense that the millions of fish literally use up the oxygen in the water unless they are hurried through the lock gates!

But back to what I mean by versatile fishing.

Fishing is fun. It is fun in all its facets. But it is the most fun, I think, for the placid, free-wheeling fisherman, whether on a popping bug or a plunker, down deep with a feather, with a worm or a grass shrimp . . . and this water is made for that sort of "universal fisherman." He's a guy who isn't going anywhere in too particular a hurry to admire a preening water turkey or some striped-necked turtles sunning themselves on a log. He notes the buzzard wheeling high, the holes in the canal bank where the ground swallows live, that brush nest where the specks ought to be gathered. You don't find him bringing any dried-out, sun-burned dead fish back home. He keeps what fish he's going to eat in top condition, alive; cleans them carefully, cooks them promptly. What he doesn't want he returns to the water alive. Old fashioned fisherman.

Like me. My essential gear for fishing St. Lucie Canal, either from bank or boat, is spinning rod, flyrod and assorted lures, plus a can of worms and a minnow dip-net. Because I'm lazy and don't like to rattle around heavy boats, I use a light plywood 10-footer which weighs only 80 pounds. There are a couple of spots on State Road 76 a few miles east of Indiantown where I can back down my station wagon to the canal's edge and ease in the little boat. I use an antique 2½-h.p. outboard. It's light to handle; it gets me there. Admittedly, this low freeboard craft has its hazards. A big shrimper or express cruiser could swamp me. I'm philosophical about it, trading the advantages of the small boat for the occasional frustration of having to haul ashore for safety's sake.

Depending on weather and water conditions, I have

my mind pretty well made up on what I'm going to do first. If it's a balmy, misty, cloudy morning, still and fishy, I'll probably unlimber the flyrod first and test out the rock ledges and tree tops. Next bet will be plugs and spoons at the side-spillways. If they are running, that's a sure pay-off. If neither of these deals pay off, or if I just naturally think that the fish are deep, I'll switch to a bottom-bumping feather or slow-wobbling spoon and try the drop-offs at the edge of the sandbars.

There are days when bass will not take anything. Then my mind switches from bass. I go scrounging around the shore grass with a dip-net, accumulate a minnow bucket full of pot-guts and grass shrimp (a tiny freshwater shrimp about half an inch long).

Then I look for a stretch where a couple of big pines have toppled into the canal, tie on to a tree-top snag, rig up the spinning outfit with No. 8 hook, split shot and bottle cork, fish deep for those delicious bluenosed bream. If they won't take worms, the grass shrimp usually prove irresistible. If the bream aren't biting, I'll ease down a pot-gut to test whether the specks might be in the mood. If business doesn't pick up at this tree top, I'll try another one, and if things should be super-dull all over, there's still a wonderful ace in the hole.

Channel cats!

As you gather from the above, I do not intend to go home without fish. Told my wife to have the grease hot. Meant it. Luckily, this last resort is one of the best so far as the end product is concerned.

I replace the split shot with two heavy buckshot, take off the cork and cast a good, healthy chunk of worms tipped with a grass shrimp as an appetizer out toward mid-channel, perhaps 120 feet off. If nothing happens in ten minutes, I try a 100-foot cast. Next a 60-footer.

Somewhere out in that canal is the "channel cat band," the unmarked route being followed today by the whiskered spotted fiddlers. Locate it and you can catch a dozen pan-sized cats in half an hour; miss it and you might wait an hour for a bite. My rod tip twitches. I'm in business. They're running small, about a pound or a little under each—just right eating size. Keep them alive till you skin them, slice down to the backbone at one-inch intervals, fry to a crunchy brown and agree with me that they're superb!

All the fish that come out of this mixed-up water are unusually fine on the table. The bass are chunky without being paunchy, clean as a whistle, fat and healthy. On the average, they are two to four-pounders, ranging up to rare seven-pounders. Both Bill Abbott and I know that there are jumbo Florida largemouths in these waters because we have seen them slinking out from the shoreline. Occasionally, too, we have seen what we think is the answer to why few of them are caught.

It's those dratted mullet.

Every so often you'll see one—a big one, at least a foot long—leap frantically out of water when pursued by snook or tarpon. Then you may note, as we have, that the huge maw engulfing the grown up mullet strikingly resembled the ugly mug of *Micropterus salmoides*, giant size, in the 10 to 14-lb. brackets.

Bill and I believe that the really whopper bass are taught bad habits by the snook and tarpon, switch to a practically exclusive diet of mullet. You might try lures designed for tarpon. Some day I'm going to try a mullet.

Can you catch the mullet abounding here? Sure,



Mitchell holds a string of St. Lucie willow cats and specks.

it's all in the know-how. I didn't know how till one day when I went to the Arundel Shops bridge to try down deep under the drawbridge approaches for big crappie with gold-specks.

Just a few people know, thank goodness, that you can catch the biggest crappies with these greenish minnows about two and a half inches long, speckled with gilt flecks, which are the creme de creme of big speckled perch fare. Very few people know how to get the gold-specks. So it was with a very comfortable sense of smugness that I began to haul up big specks, one and a half to two-pounders. I noted an old colored man on the bank about 50 feet away, cane pole fishing for mullet. Maybe he was a little smug, too. Anyhow, he began to hoist in big mullet with amazing regularity while I, as regularly, hoisted up perch.

"What you usin', Mister?" he asked.

"Minnows," I said, but carefully concealing *what* sort of minnows they were. "What you using?"

"Worms," he replied, but that still didn't tell me *how* he was using them. I casually walked over that way and noted that he was using a very small hook, no split shot—which is very important, the worm must float free—about 2½ feet down under a delicately trimmed cork no bigger than the last joint of my little finger. When the cork trembled he did not heave the cane but gently raised it till he felt a solid pull—and then struck. It was really none of my business, and what I was doing was really none of his business, although he did come over and borrow a match while I was fishing.

Next afternoon I was squatting at *his* place on the bank having a glorious time catching mullet. He showed up with a bucket, walked out to *my* spot on the bridge, and began hauling up specks. On gold-speck minnows, of all things!

My advice on this know-how stuff is to keep an eye on the other fellow and you can be reasonably certain

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The Fisheries Division Reports



Nets are used by technically-trained fisheries workers to sample fish populations. -jj-



Selective poisoning techniques developed by the Fisheries Division have been notably successful. -bh-

Application and experimental work with a selective electrical rough fish apparatus has provided the basis for the design of a unit which will be used primarily for control work.



DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS the Fisheries Division of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has continued to make great strides in research as well as in the application of various management techniques.

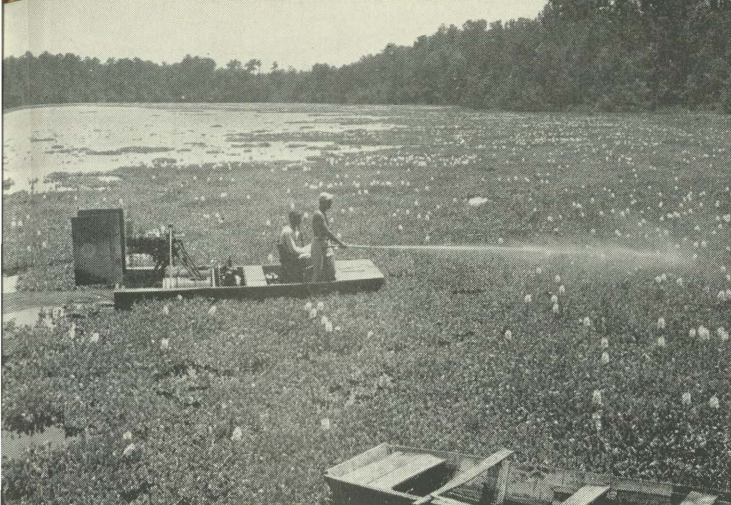
During that period several major objectives have been achieved and numerous smaller projects brought to completion. Some of these activities—hyacinth control, selective poisoning of rough fishes and the chemical renovation of lakes and ponds, for example—have resulted in tremendously increased fishing areas. Other activities, such as creel census, population studies, age and growth studies, and technical advice to private pond owners and bait dealers, have supplied data to the Commission and, to the fishermen, information which will help reduce the time between fish bites.

Let us take a brief look at some of the current activities related to the major projects of the Division.

HYACINTH CONTROL—The creation of this project was the result of numerous complaints from sportsmen and Commission personnel that many of the state's favorite fishing lakes and streams were being choked out or were already totally blanketed by water hyacinths (*Eichornia crassipes*). Other agencies previously active in hyacinth control were limited almost exclusively to efforts to aid drainage and navigation. Hence a majority of Florida's inland waters received no attention toward controlling this vegetative menace to the fisheries. The popularity of the Hyacinth Control program, which is more successful than originally expected, is exemplified by the numerous requests which are received weekly asking consideration of treatment of lakes and streams.

The 1955 session of the Florida State Legislature appropriated a fund amounting to \$276,500 subject to control of the Florida State Cabinet and administered over a period of two years by the Game Commission, for hyacinth control. The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission also put into its budget \$100,000 for the control of noxious vegetation during the two year period. This allowance from the Commission was supplemented by interested sportsmen and various County Commissions. As a result of a concentrated effort by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and the Legislature, approximately 18,000 acres of hyacinths and other types of noxious vegetation either have been brought under control or eradicated.

The chemical used in the operation acts upon a plant as a cancerous growth reacts upon animal tissue. The use of hormone type herbicides, such as 2,4-D amine and ester and 2,4,5-T, is usually successful in controlling most emergent vegetation. The average amount of



Left: Playing an important part in the hyacinth control operations is the airboat. Photo by Ralph Voss.



Right: Experimental spraying of hyacinths from a helicopter indicated great possibilities in treating certain areas all but inaccessible by more conventional spray devices.

herbicide required to bring about control of one acre of hyacinths is .64 gallon. The cost per acre of vegetation killed has averaged about \$7.00, including the cost of equipment, salaries, operating expenses, and chemicals. The actual cost of chemicals per acre killed averages about \$3.00.

Through the eradication project, numerous lakes and streams have been freed of hyacinths. The Suwannee, Withlacoochee, Peace, and parts of the Kissimmee Rivers have been freed of the hyacinth menace to the extent that only a small amount of follow up work is required each year to maintain a desirable condition. The major remaining problem of hyacinth destruction lies in the St. Johns River Basin.

The U. S. Corps of Engineers controls the hyacinths in this drainage only to the extent of preventing blocking of navigation. Qualified authorities estimate that an expenditure of \$50,000 for chemicals alone would be necessary to bring about satisfactory control in this heavily infested area.

Playing an important part in the spray operations is the airboat, a craft capable of penetrating areas either too shallow or too thickly clogged with vegetation to allow operation of outboard powered boats. Outboard equipped spray boats are used as follow-up equipment in treating areas previously treated from airboat or airplane.

On large blocks of noxious vegetation located in areas accessible from the air, the spray plane provides a highly efficient means of applying control chemicals.

LAKE AND STREAM SURVEY—The Lake and Stream Survey project was launched in July, 1954. Its main objective is to collect and catalog information concerning public lakes of over 150 acres in size, and all important streams. Where specific fisheries problems are encountered, recommendations for the alleviation of the troubles are advanced by the survey team.

Information of value to sports fishermen is published periodically in technical or semi-technical fisheries bulletins for distribution to interested persons. In addition, detailed biological data are kept on file at the Commission office in Tallahassee for future reference and utilization in attacking fisheries problems on other waters in the state.

One bulletin, "Fish and Fishing in Leon and Gadsden Counties, Florida," has been published and distributed. Additional copies are available from the Commission's main office in Tallahassee. The next scheduled publication is based on a survey of the Apalachicola River system. Over one half of the field

work was completed in 1955, at which time the survey team was called to South Florida to conduct a fishery survey on Lake Okeechobee.

In the Lake Okeechobee investigation, the Lake and Stream Survey team operated in cooperation with the Commission's River Basin Study personnel. An 83-page technical report details the results of this investigation. The purpose of the survey was to obtain biological data upon which the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission could base recommendations to the Corps of Engineers regarding a proposed dike along the northwest shore of Lake Okeechobee. It was in the interest of the area's fisheries resource that the Commission recommended a particular dike alignment that would have the least detrimental effect on the fish population on the highly important recreational fishing lake.

It was found that the broad shallow shore area around the northwest shore of the lake made an important contribution to the general fishery of Lake Okeechobee. The dike should be placed where it would cause the least interference with this area.

The Lake and Stream Survey team participated in a general fisheries investigation of Lake George in Putnam, Volusia, and Marion Counties during the early part of 1956. The Survey's contribution to this investigation consisted essentially of fish population sampling by spot poisoning and trawling. A comparison was drawn between these trawl samples and those collected during 1953. A technical paper detailing the results of the trawl work and the spot poisoning samples was incorporated into the general report on Lake George.

Upon completion of the Lake George assignment the Lake and Stream Survey was moved back to North-west Florida. There work was conducted on Merritt's Mill Pond, a 240-acre impoundment near Marianna.

For many years, this body of water supported one of the most important sports fisheries in the north-western part of the state. In recent years, however, there has been a sharp decline in the average size of the fishes taken. This size decline has been especially noticeable in regards to the bluegill, the principal pan fish species in the pond.

An investigation of this body of water showed an overpopulation of bluegills (more than 6,000 per acre) and a rank growth of submerged vegetation which covered most of the bottom of the pond. Therefore, recommendations were made to draw the impoundment down to a low level during the winter months in order

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Gill nets are used for rough fish control work and in sampling fish populations. -bh-

to reduce the population of bluegills and to bring about partial control of the submerged vegetation by exposing it to the open air.

At the present time, Merritt's Mill Pond has been partially drained and the effects of the draw down are being closely observed to insure a proper fish population balance when the pond returns to its normal level. The pond level will be restored in time for bass spawning.

During the latter part of 1956, a probable new species of bass (*Chipola Bass*) was collected by the Lake and Stream Survey team from the Chipola River near Marianna.

The Chipola, or "shoal" bass up to the present time has been found only in a small section of the Chipola River. In this section, the bottom is of limestone and the water is clear and fast flowing. There are numerous rapids or shoals with deep pools in between. In fighting qualities, the new bass is comparable to the smallmouth found in states other than Florida.

At the present time, 1956-57, the Lake and Stream Survey is conducting field work on North Bay near Panama City, in Bay County. Bay County plans to impound this area of salt water and to convert it to fresh water as a source of domestic and industrial supply for Panama City and vicinity. The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has an interest in the proposed impoundment from a fresh water fishery standpoint.

Work plans for the Lake and Stream Survey include the completion of field work on the Apalachicola River system and investigation of "trouble" spots in Northwest Florida.

RIVER BASIN FISHERIES INVESTIGATION — The River Basin Fisheries Investigation, for which the U. S. Corps of Engineers is the planning agency and the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control District is the operating and maintenance agency, was originally authorized by the United States Congress in 1948. The project boundaries include all or part of 17 central and south Florida counties and some of Florida's major rivers and lakes, i.e., the Kissimmee River, Lake Okeechobee, and a major portion of the St. Johns River.

The total value of surface water utilization administered directly or indirectly by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission is 128 million dollars annually. Of this total, sport fishing alone makes up 83 million

dollars annually. These values are increasing about 3 million dollars annually. The fresh waters within the River Basin Fisheries Investigation project are major contributors to this already large and ever increasing business. Tourism is one of Florida's biggest businesses, contributing over a billion dollars in 1955, and our fresh water resources are an integral part of tourism and associated recreation sought by residents and visitors alike.

The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission is acutely aware that a water control project of the type being formulated for central and south Florida could seriously impair the fresh water resources. Consequently, the fisheries investigations of the River Basin Fisheries Investigation project was formed to study these engineering proposals. This project was initiated November 1, 1955, as a cooperative Federal-State study financed through the provisions of the Dingell-Johnson Act.

The purpose of this project is to act as technical advisors to the Corps of Engineers, the planning agency, on the mitigation of losses, and the possible increment of benefits to a valuable fishery resource.

Before initiating this fisheries project, a study was made to determine the major factors of flood control construction that would affect the fishery resource. It was found that ditching and diking, water fluctuation control, and the subsequent effects each would have upon the fishery population and, necessarily the economics, were the primary factors.

Ditching and diking takes many forms, i.e., channelization of a river, dikes placed on the edge of an existing flood plain, and so on. In most cases this construction work will be done in shallow water or other areas that are biologically important and must be maintained if the existing population of fishes is to continue to perpetuate itself in numbers great enough to provide good fishing. This shallow water, or littoral area, is

Experimental use of explosives on rough fish concentrations has given some promise as a control method. Photo by Jim Reed



thought of as the nursery grounds for most species of fish, and construction work often seriously damages or destroys these valuable food producing and spawning areas.

Fluctuating water levels are highly desirable from the standpoint of fish production. Planning in the River Basin Fisheries Investigation Project specifies water level manipulation that varies considerably with existing conditions. Economic information is compiled on a state-wide basis as well as for specific areas.

Project activities are designed to inventory existing biological conditions in areas under consideration for flood control construction.

Biological data when coupled with economic data gives a relatively complete picture of what the effects of construction will be on an area as well as the pre- and post-construction value of the area. All data, along with recommendations are submitted to the Corps of Engineers in the form of reports. Three such reports have been written to date: Lake Istokpoga, Conservation Area No. 2, and Northwest Shore of Lake Okeechobee.

SELECTIVE POISONING—Selective poisoning techniques developed by the Fisheries Division have been notably successful. The destruction of large numbers of gizzard shad and threadfin shad has resulted in tremendously improved sport fishing, particularly in lakes which have large populations of black crappie. The largest lake treated was Newman's Lake, 6,200 acres in area. Much interest is being displayed in scheduling selective poisoning on 48-square mile Lake Apopka in Lake and Orange Counties.

The basis for continuing this phase of fish management activity on an accelerated scale is contained in a series of experiments which were conducted under Federal Aid auspices. Briefly, these experiments have



The Lake and Stream Survey team collects and catalogs information concerning public waters. -bh-

consisted of studies of fish populations in small lakes containing large proportions of shad, and of changes brought about in the fish populations as a result of selective poisoning. To determine the effects of various concentrations of poison under different climatological conditions, as many as four applications of the poison have been made on a single body of water. Selective poisoning promises to develop into a major fishery management technique on Florida lakes.

ELECTRICAL FISH CONTROL—Application and experimental work with the Commission's selective electrical rough fish apparatus has provided the basis for the design of a unit which will be used primarily for control work. The low water of the Glades region concentrated tremendous numbers of gar and bowfin in the canal region. This in turn offered the Commission an excellent opportunity to study the effects of various electrical input voltages on large numbers of fish. An innovation in this work was the development of a baiting device to concentrate gars so the machine could take large numbers without moving long distances. A baiting device was used for this accomplishment.

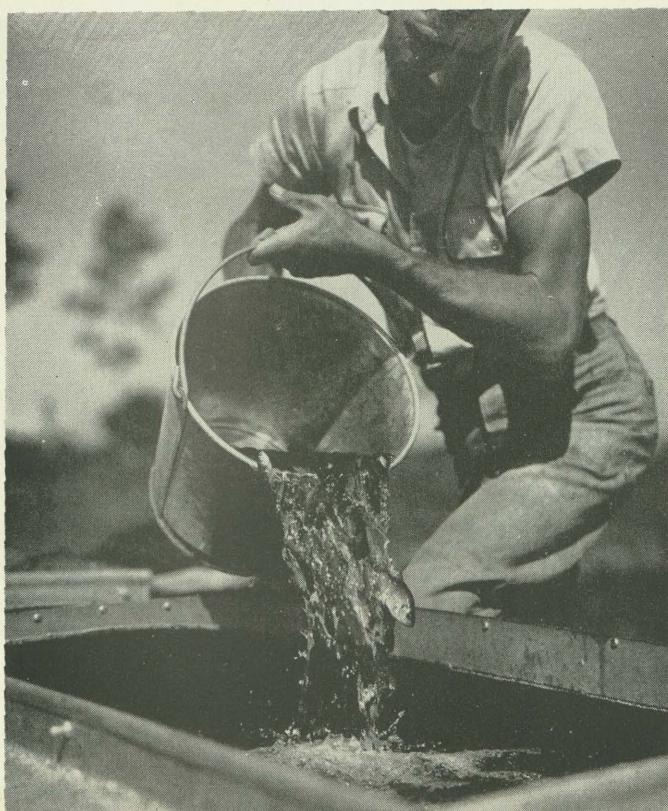
HATCHERIES—Blackwater Hatchery, located at Holt, produced during the year 1955, 46,631 bass, 102,800 bream, bass and shellcrackers, and 1,062,351 bluegills. During 1956, 67,900 bass and 1,474,100 bream were produced. Winter Haven Hatchery, located at Eagle Lake, produced during the year 1955 a total of 471,249 bass and 179,300 bream. During the year 1956, 408,980 bass and 160,490 bluegills were produced.

REGIONAL FISHERIES EXTENSION—The work accomplished by the Commission's Regional Fisheries Extension technicians is detailed in the biennial reports of the five administrative regions. The report covering all Commission activities for the 1955-56 biennium is now being prepared and will be made available to the public upon publication.

On a state-wide basis, the regional fisheries extension technicians accomplished the following: stocked 1,182 bodies of water. Inspected 2,077 lakes and ponds. Stocked 2,072,740 bream, of which 421,500 were obtained from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Welaka during the fall of 1956, and the remainder from Commission hatcheries. Stocked 414,100 bass.

Regional technicians also participated in various projects, surveys and investigations. ●

Hatchery reared bluegills are used to restock bodies of water being rehabilitated by Fisheries Division personnel.





Wildlife Officer Kenneth Mitchell (left) and Doc Nobles with part of an 800-pound load of bream, shellcrackers, and crappie recently seized from violators near Jasper in Hamilton county. Photo by Ed Timmons.

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Wildlife Officers R. W. Phillips of St. Augustine and Marvin Canova of Salt Springs unloading game fish taken by violators with a haul seine on Lake George. In addition to 400 pounds of game fish, the officers seized 850 yards of seine, 2 boats and a 25 h.p. motor. Photo by Jim Reed.



Ken McNaron of Tallahassee Radio Station WMEN displays a 20-lb. gobbler he bagged near Capitola, 10 miles east of Tallahassee.



Game Management Biologist Louis F. Gainey and Wildlife Officer Elliott Lott banding and releasing turkeys in the Okeechobee Management area located 18 miles north of Okeechobee. Special pouches were used for transporting the wild-caught birds from the trapping site in the Fisheating Creek Breeding Ground. Eight hens and one gobbler were released at this time on the 16,000 acre Management Area. Photos by Ralph Voss.

THE STATE



Trapped in a ditch full of soft tar, this bald eagle held by Lester Piper seemed faced with certain death. For over a year the bird was fed and housed at the Everglades Wonder Garden in Bonita Springs. Then, with new plumage having replaced that matted by the tar, the eagle was banded and released. Photo by Robert Garrison.



Game Biologist Les Libby records band number of mallard hen before releasing the bird on the St. Marks Refuge in Wakulla County. Waterfowl trapped and banded on the refuge, as well as at other sites throughout the state, provide information useful in formulating plans for the management of the country's waterfowl. Photo by Jake Johnson.

Florida Sportsmen's Clubs

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The intent of the Sportsmen's Club Conservation Awards Program will be to further the proper utilization and conservation of the natural resources of the State of Florida—soils, waters, minerals, forests and wildlife—through an awards program designed to bring about greater interest in conservation projects and to give proper recognition to those persons and organizations who make outstanding contributions to the general natural resource welfare of the community, the region and the state.

GENERAL PROGRAMS

The Sportsmen's Clubs Conservation Awards Program shall be carried forward through a system of Local, Regional and Governor's State Awards to those organizations and persons who make the greatest contributions in natural resource work along a selected line of endeavor.

GENERAL RULES

1. The Sportsmen's Clubs Conservation Awards Program shall encompass the calendar year January 1 through December 31.

2. Each yearly program shall culminate in an annual Awards Banquet to be held in February of the following year, at which time the annual awards shall be presented by the sponsor.

3. Local Club Awards shall be determined prior to and presented at a public meeting held during January of each year for the preceding year's activities.

4. Regional and Governor's State Awards shall be determined prior to the month of February, and following the January Local Club awards presentation. Winners shall be notified in January following the State Committee's decision.

5. Regional and Governor's State Awards shall be presented at the annual Awards Banquet, sponsored by Sears Foundation, in February. Recipients of Governor's State Awards shall be chosen from those receiving Regional honors, but in no event shall both State and Regional Awards be presented to the same person.



Regional and local club winners will receive a gold label button in the shape of Florida with the words I CONSERVE imprinted upon it.

6. Local Awards will be handled by Sportsmen's Clubs or other conservation organizations in any locality. All affiliates of the Florida Wildlife Federation shall be immediately eligible for use of the program. Any Sportsmen's Clubs or other conservation organization not affiliated with the Federation may participate, without obligation, by making known their desire to do so, and further agreeing to abide by the intent and regulations governing the program. Communications should be mailed to T. N. Anderson, Secretary, Florida Wildlife Federation, Box 1179, Eustis, Florida.

REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

1. All participating clubs must announce publicly through all possible channels the facts concerning the Sportsmen's Clubs Conservation Awards Program at the onset of the program. They shall also publicize pertinent facts before the public meeting for presenting such awards, as well as after presentation of Local Awards and Regional

Auspices:
Florida Wildlife Federation

and State Awards if possible.

2. All participating clubs must notify the Secretary of the Federation of the awards they desire to present and present a statement or case history in writing after the presentation of such awards so that Local Award recipients may become eligible for Regional and State Awards.

3. Local Club Awards shall be designated and judged by the President and Secretary of the Local Club, plus a Local Forester, a Local Work Unit Conservationist or a County Agricultural Agent, and an Outdoor Editor or Writer acting together as a judging panel when all such offices are represented in the locality.

4. Regional Awards shall be designated and judged by the Awards Chairman of the Florida Wildlife Federation plus designated representatives of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, the Florida State Board of Conservation, the Florida Forestry Service, the Florida Soil Conservation Service.

5. All Regional and State Awards shall be presented at the Annual Banquet furnished by the sponsors. Notice of Regional Awards recipients shall be mailed to same and made public to the press two weeks prior to the Annual Banquet. State Awards recipients shall be publicly named only at the Annual Banquet

RULES

SALT WATER CONSERVATION

THE FOLLOWING POINTS will be considered in judging candidates for salt water conservation honors:

1. Participation in organized conservation activities.
 - (a.) Offices held in clubs.
 - (b.) Committee work performed, club activities engaged in.
 - (c.) Regularity of attendance at meetings, etc.
2. Cooperation with local, state and federal governmental agencies.
 - (a.) Advising authorities of crit-

- ical conservation conditions.
 - (b.) Acting in liaison capacity between agencies and general public.
 - (c.) Actual participation in projects sponsored by government agencies.
3. Public relations.
 - (a.) Preparation of reports for general public.
 - (b.) Newspaper and magazine articles, radio and television appearances, talks and

(Continued on Page 49)

Rules governing the various specialized conservation programs will appear in **FLORIDA WILDLIFE** or they may be obtained by writing to Florida Wildlife Federation, Box 1179, Eustis, Florida.

Conservation Awards Program

Sponsor:
The Sears Foundation

and then thoroughly publicized together with announcement of the next annual program already in progress.

6. Career conservation employees will not be eligible for the 1957 awards program, however, study is being made at this time concerning inclusion of career employees in 1958.

7. Special references for specialized programs such as Forestry, Soil Conservation, Writers, etc., will be found in the Rules presented by each group elsewhere in the publication.

8. Local Awards may be presented under the auspices of any member club of the Florida Wildlife Federation or any other club which has abided by Awards Program Rules and Regulations. Such clubs may include Garden Clubs, Forestry Groups, Farmer Groups, Luncheon Clubs, Farm Bureau Units, etc.

ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET

The Annual Awards Banquet, sponsored by Sears Foundation, shall occur in February, at which time awards shall be presented for activities of the preceding year. The Banquet shall be based on 100 persons; the cost of same being borne by the sponsor and will be held in Tallahassee, Florida.

GOVERNOR'S STATE AWARDS

Conservationist of the year shall receive a Gold Medal, a Governor's Certificate and a Cash Award of



Winners of the Governor's State awards will receive a gold lapel button in the shape of Florida with GOVERNOR'S AWARD imprinted on it.

\$100.00.

Outdoor Writers Awards shall be a Gold Medal, a Governor's Certificate and a Cash Award of \$50.00.

Foresters Award shall be a Gold Medal, a Governor's Certificate and a Cash Award of \$50.00.

Soil Conservationist Award shall be a Gold Medal, a Governor's Certificate and a Cash Award of \$50.00.

Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission Award shall be a Gold Medal, a Governor's Certificate and a Cash Award of \$50.00.

Salt Water Conservation Award shall be a Gold Medal, a Governor's Certificate and a Cash Award of \$50.00.

Club Public Relations Award shall be a Gold Medal, a Governor's Certificate and a Cash Award of \$50.00.

Adult Guidance of Jr. Conservation Effort. A group or individual will receive a Gold Medal, a Governor's Certificate and a Cash Award of \$50.00.

REGIONAL AWARDS

There shall be in each of the Regional classes Five (5) winners,

RULES

FORESTRY

PURPOSE—To publicly recognize citizens of Florida for their outstanding work and endeavor in forest conservation through proper timber management, reforestation, fire prevention, forest legislation, education, etc.—providing that in the opinion of the Judge, they are not primarily employed in the field of forestry.

It is not the intent of this awards program to set up a "contest" involving a prescribed procedure through which a "contestant" may pursue an award. On the contrary, these

awards are to be presented to those persons who, in the opinion of the Judges, have unselfishly given their time and effort toward promoting a better realization by the general public of those things which make for better forest conservation.

NOMINATIONS FOR AWARDS

—Anyone may nominate a Florida citizen through any Judge serving on the current Judging committee. Nominations may be made either verbally or in the form of a letter.

One (1) from each Region in the State. Such Regions shall be outlined as are the regions of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. Regional winners shall be notified and the most deserving of which shall receive the State Award in lieu of a Regional Award.

Outstanding Outdoor Writers Awards winners shall each receive a Gold Medal, a Certificate and a Cash Award of \$25.00.

Foresters Awards winners shall each receive a Gold Medal, a Certificate and a Cash Award of \$25.00.

Soil Conservationist Awards winners shall each receive a Gold Medal, a Certificate and a Cash Award of \$25.00.

Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission Awards winners shall each receive a Gold Medal, a Certificate and a Cash Award of \$25.00.

Salt Water Conservation Awards winners shall each receive a Gold Medal, a Certificate and a Cash Award of \$25.00.

Club Public Relations Awards winners shall each receive a Gold Medal, a Certificate and a Cash Award of \$25.00.

Adult Guidance of Jr. Conservation Effort. A group or individual will receive a Gold Medal, a Certificate and a Cash Award of \$25.00.

LOCAL CLUB AWARDS

Outstanding Conservationist of Local Club shall receive a Gold Medal and a Certificate.

Foresters Award winner shall receive a Gold Medal and a Certificate.

Soil Conservationist Award winner shall receive a Gold Medal and a Certificate.

Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission Award winner shall receive a Gold Medal and a Certificate.

Salt Water Conservation Award or Public Relation Award winner shall receive a Gold Medal and a Certificate.

Non-Members Citizens Award for Conservation Effort winner shall receive a Gold Medal and a Certificate.

Adult Guidance of Jr. Conservation Effort. An individual shall receive a Gold Medal and a Certificate.

Rules governing the specialized programs for the Public Relations, Soil Conservation, Outdoor Writers, and Game & Fresh Water Fish Conservation Awards appeared in the March issue of FLORIDA WILDLIFE.

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Night Blooming Cereus, said to have bloomed for the first time on the night of the crucifixion, is best described as one of Nature's most perfect flowers.



The Anemones, believed by some authorities to be the "lilies of the field" mentioned in the Bible, grow abundantly in Palestine. According to legend, Christ's blood fell upon anemones that were growing near the cross, which explains the name of Blood-drops-of-Christ, by which they are called in Palestine.

Living Symbols of Easter Legends

By JAY CASEY

EASTER, the season of general rejoicing when all nature awakens to renewed life, reminds us again of the wondrous miracle of the first joyful Easter.

This is the time of the year when flowers reach their peak of loveliness, and since the Bible contains numerous allusions to various plants, many of them are the subjects for interesting legends and symbols associated with the Crucifixion and the Resurrection of our Saviour.

Doubtless there are more legends relating to the lily and the palm than of any other plants. However, for this article we have selected other plants that also are closely associated with Easter art and lore.

Legend says that many plants withered and died, so great was their grief during the crucifixion of Jesus. While others were so marked that forever more they were to show the effect of His death.

One such plant is the dogwood tree. At the time Jesus Christ was here on earth this tree was as large and as sturdy as the oak. According to legend its wood was so strong and firm it was chosen to furnish material for the cross.

That it should—of all trees—be used for such a purpose, the dogwood was exceedingly sad. Even in extreme agony Jesus had pity for all of the sorrows in the world, and sensing the dogwood's distress He made it a promise. Never again would it be used for a cross, and from then on its branches would be slender and twisted.

Jesus also told the dogwood that henceforth its

blossoms would be in the form of a cross, with two short petals and two long ones. In the center at the outer edge of each, there would be the print of a nail, stained with rust, while in the center the tiny tendrils would be in the form of a crown of thorns.

There are many legends concerning the material from which the cross was fashioned. According to the Pomeranians the pine furnished the timber. Since then its branches have grown in cross-like whorls, and if a cone is cut lengthwise the form of a cross is visible.

One ancient legend of the cross is that Adam, near death, sent Seth to the Garden of Eden to beg of the angel who was on guard at the entrance to give him just a sip of the juice from the Tree of Life. Instead, he was given a small branch from the tree, which Seth later planted on the grave of Adam. In time the branch became a tree with three branches. One was cedar, one was olive, and the other was cypress. Thousands of years later the three-wooded tree was used for the cross upon which Jesus died.

The German legend of the cross is that it was made from a pear tree. The cross took root and became a living tree. It produced flowers that were scarlet like blood; its fruit was also a deep red, and in the center of each pear was a crown, while its leaves had red veins.

Another legend says that Jesus appeared to His disciples after the Resurrection under a live oak tree for this reason: The majestic oak was the only tree in the forest that did not protest against being used for the cross. Because it was willing to die with Him the

Saviour forgave it and proved His forgiveness by meeting the disciples under the branches of a live oak tree.

Do you know why the aspens tremble on even the calmest days? The Polish legend is that during the tragic hour when Christ was impaled upon the cross all of the plants bowed their heads in sorrow. That is, all except the aspens who said, "Why should we bow? We are pure and have never sinned." Before they had finished speaking a cool wind blew their leaves and they began to shudder, which they have continued to do down through the ages.

In folklore daffodils represent the glorious light that surrounds Easter, and its bright hope of eternal life. Jonquils, because of the tiny trumpets that emerge from the golden star-like petals of the blossoms, are symbols of the message of Easter to be announced throughout the entire world.

Known as "cock of the mountain" by the Arabs, the cyclamen is a favorite Easter flower. It is striking because of its odd curved petals and crimson eye and has long been dedicated to the Mother of Christ because the sorrow that pierced her heart is symbolized in the drop of blood at the heart of the flower.

The pretty jasmine did not die during the Crucifixion, but folded its flowers. Upon re-opening they were no longer pink, but had turned snow-white, and never again showed color. The red poppy bears the mark of a cross in its center, and the violet (across which the shadow of the cross fell) changed its color from a pale tint to a deep shade of purple.

In certain sections of Europe the anemone is known as the Easter flower. The old Germans called it "cow flower," because it was used to make garlands for the cows during Easter festivals.

While bending beneath the burden of the cross on the way to Golgotha the drops of agony falling from Christ's brow upon the ground made marks which later became the purple of the jack-in-the-pulpit, so says a very ancient legend.

According to a Swedish story, when the Saviour was upon the cross an angel prayed that the drops of blood flowing from His wounds might take some form of beauty and live in the world as a constant reminder of the blood that Jesus shed for mankind. Immediately the fuchsia came up in numbers. It was beautiful, but without perfume because its fragrance had ascended as incense to heaven, but in this lovely flower drops of blood still live.

Few plants, if any, are so steeped in legends as are the hawthorns. In Austria legends the crown of thorns worn by Christ was made from hawthorn, while in other countries the holly and acacia are credited with material from which the crown was fashioned.

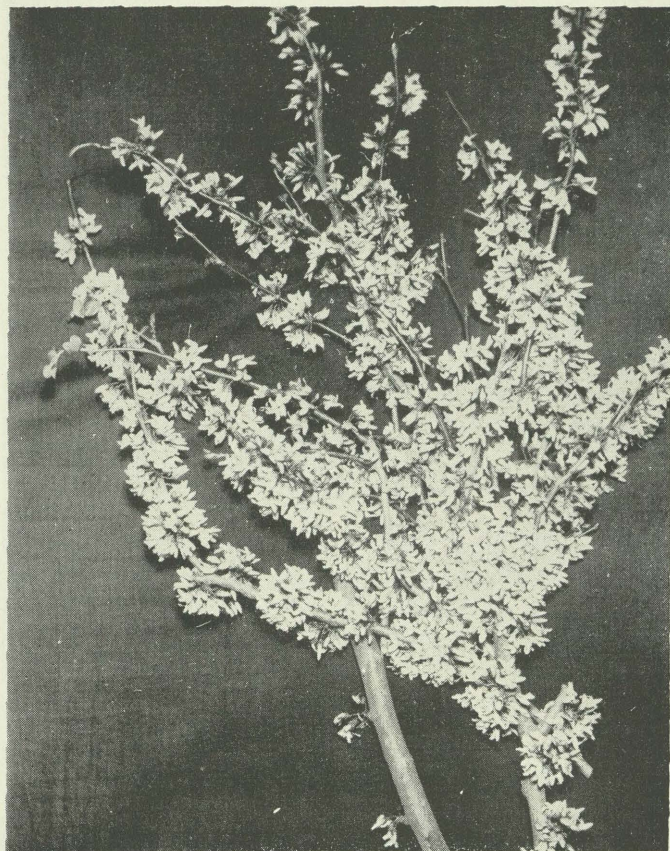
Tradition relates that as Charlemagne was kneeling before the crown of thorns the long-dead wood suddenly burst into bloom and the air was filled with the sweet fragrance of hawthorn blossoms, proving that the crown of thorns was made of its spines.

Other stories relate the bulrush was the sceptre that was placed in the hands of our Lord in mockery. And that the angel trumpet's beautiful white flowers were used by the angels to proclaim the glad tidings of Christ's resurrection.

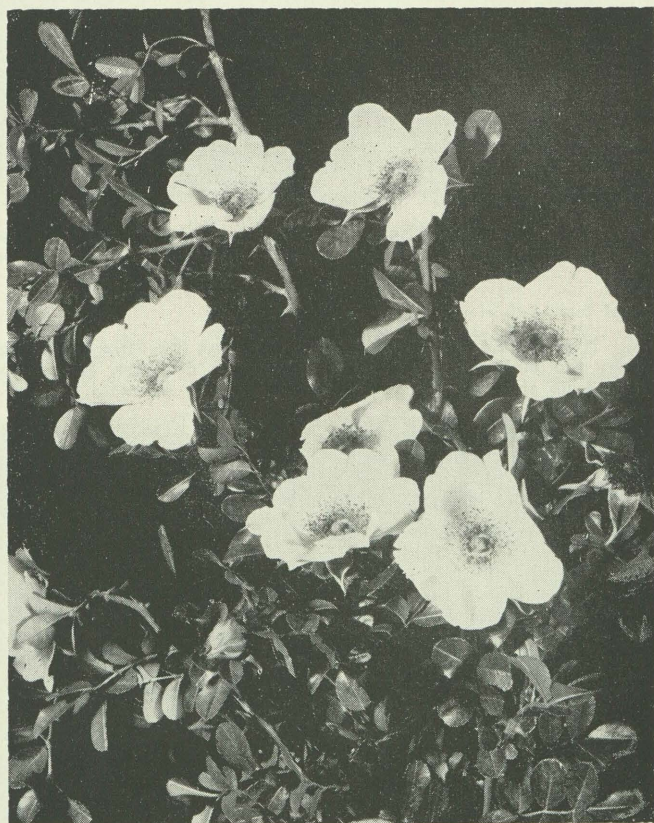
Although many flowers tell a portion of the Easter story, only one plant tells the entire story, and that is the passion flower, one of Florida's most unusual and beloved native plants.

When the early Spanish explorers reached South America they saw a vine, which they said had grown at the foot of the cross upon which Christ died. Because

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Redbud blossoms, indeed a symbol of spring, are said to have been "white like the snow" before the crucifixion. However, because Judas chose this tree from which to hang himself, the blossoms blushed in shame and have remained a blushing red to this day.



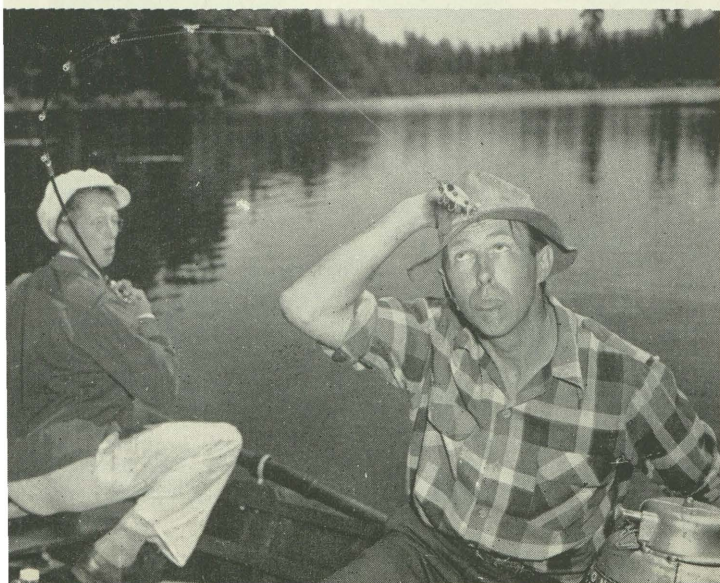
Roses, it is alleged, were free from thorns at the beginning but grew thorns as mankind became corrupt. Since their branches are so pliable, some contend that the rose was twined into the crown of thorns.



1. Bass live in lakes and that's where you'll go to get one. Your partners will see to it that you're loaded to your ears with equipment and advice. Their companionship will supply everything but fish.



2. Where to fish? That takes some crystal-ball gazing. Rest assured that three men in a rowboat will inevitably find themselves fishing in the same area. It's inevitable.



3. Now to cast. A flip of the wrist, letting the whip of the pole carry the plug in a straight line with the direction of the cast will do the trick. Get your mind off the mermaid, chum!

The Art of Catching A Bass

By ERIC WAHLEEN

BASS LIVE IN LAKES and are caught by people. Not all people like to catch bass, but not all bass get caught either, so it all comes out about even.

Some bass are smarter than others, but all bass fishermen are about the same. They just like to fish for bass. Sometimes they catch one.

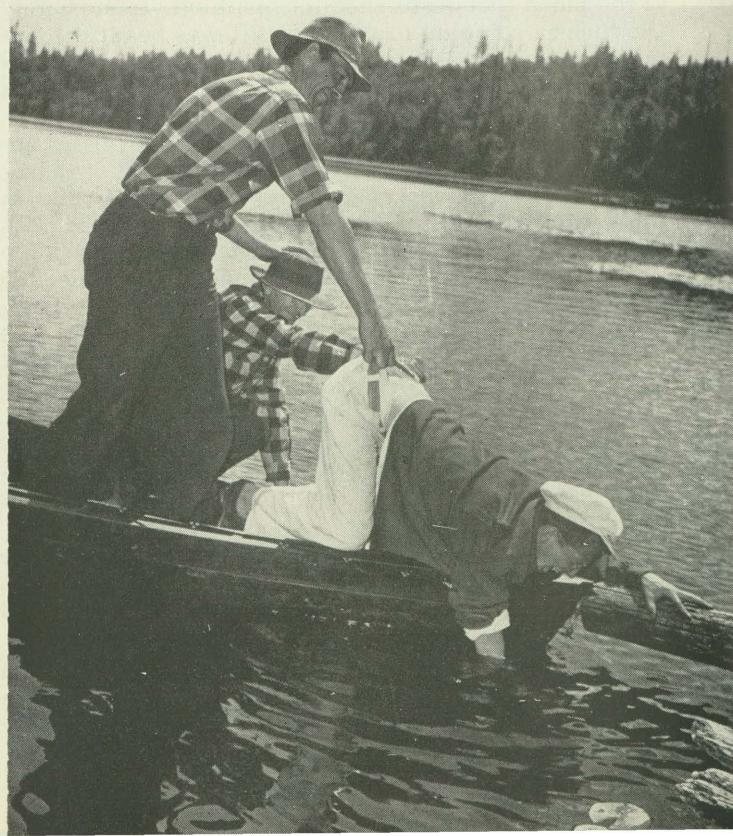
No matter what gadget is devised to tempt a bass, it must end up on the end of a line. How else would one catch a bass? The line, in turn, must be cast outward from a stable platform—namely a rowboat.

Bass are noted for their ability to unnerve a fisherman. Quite often they blow their top completely and go home empty-handed. (The fishermen, that is.)

On the other hand, sometimes a bass is caught. But not without effort. Following the turn of events to see just how this is accomplished, let us brighten the day with a "pome." To-wit:

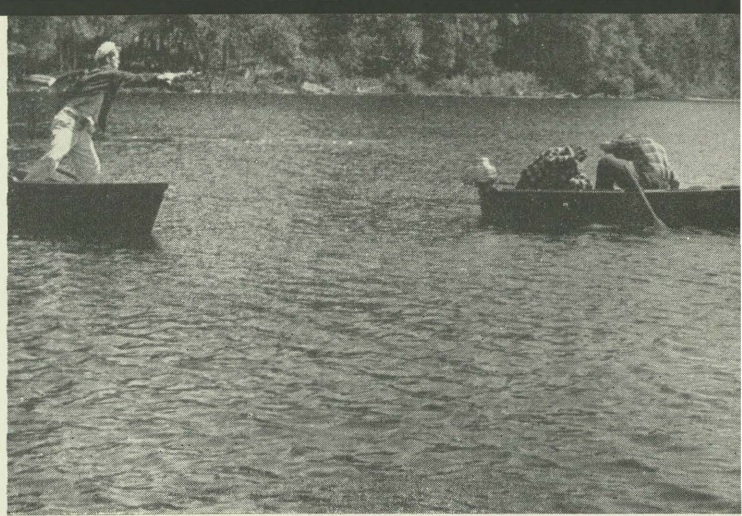
*Of all the fishes in the lake
My favorite is the bass.
He climbs upon the lily leaves
And slides down on his hands and knees.*

4. It's not sporting to tempt a bass with live bait, not even a five-headed fingerling. But how else will you retrieve a sharp-pronged menace hung up on an underwater snag?

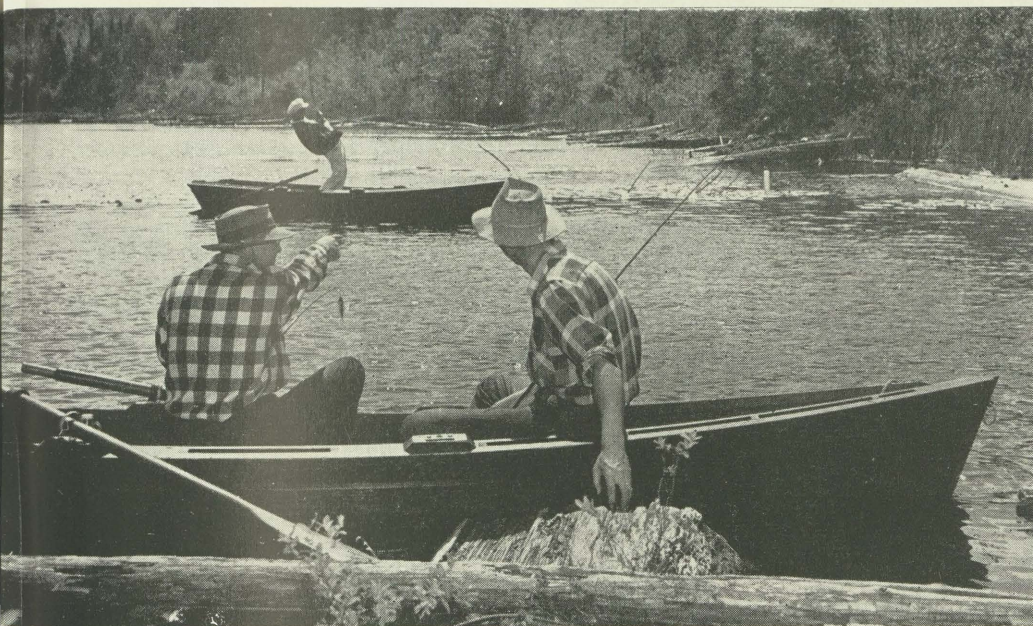




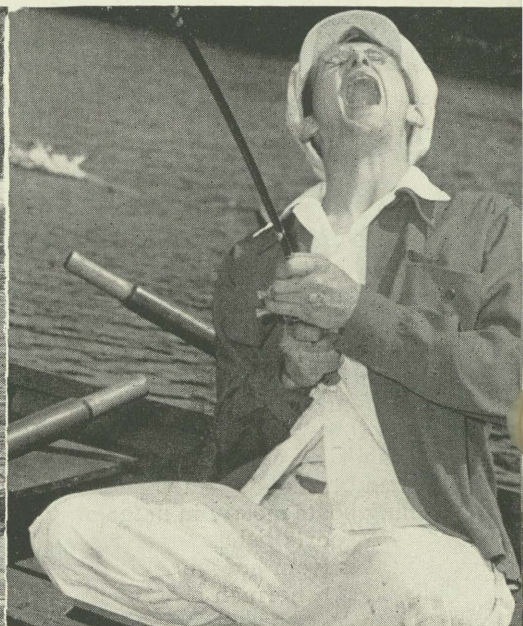
5. Three's a crowd in any fisherman's boat. So cast off, partner —you're on your own!



6. Side-winding cast calls for lots of room, and woe to anyone within range. That swishing plug may snag a duck on the wing unless a backlash brings it up short of the target.

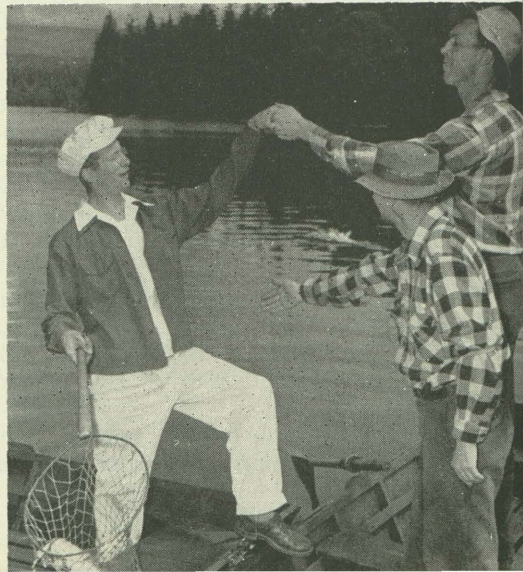


7. Snagging the shoreline can be interpreted as a method of creating long narrow lakes, or a process of shaking food off of brush to feed the bass.



8. Bass strike at unexpected times. A loose grip on a bent pole can't be tolerated. An exultant shout will bring uncalled for assistance - - -

9. Partners will descend like a flock of locusts. Their free advice is guaranteed to be distracting. But in spite of that the net result will be a boated bass, or a bass-in-net, so to speak.



10. You'll be welcomed with open arms into the arms of the dyed-in-the-wool bass fraternity. Your past inept errors will be forgiven. After all, haven't you just become the proud owner of a five pound largemouth black bass?



Macy Parkman of Jensen Beach, fly fisherman extra-ordinary, finds the rear seat dry wells a perfect place for delicate fly casting gear. These dry wells can be converted to live wells or ice boxes if so desired.

Revolt Afloat

By CHUCK SCHILLING

THE SPORTS FISHERMAN is the forgotten man of the boating industry. American anglers, who nursed the boating industry through its swaddling years, are now lost in the stampede of converted automobile fans, who want their new boats to have more and more power (like cars), go faster and faster (like cars), and be full of gadgets, chrome, and two-toned paint jobs (like cars). A self-respecting fisherman wouldn't be caught dead in 90% of the boats being turned out today, and what's worse, the other 10% are fishing boats mostly in name only.

We sports fishermen have a right to expect better than this from boat manufacturers. Take a look at the boats we fishermen are expected to buy and then hold an angler's yardstick against them. Consider the designs, qualities, and materials. It's a sad picture. It would seem that most boat manufacturers who blithely advertise their products as "a fisherman's dream" haven't the foggiest notion what a fisherman really wants in his fishing boat.

Today, in America, there are over 6 million pleasure boats in use. Four hundred thirty-four thousand new boats were sold in 1956 alone. Two hundred eighty thousand of these were outboard craft. There are 4½ million outboard motors in use in America, with 584,000 new outboard motors being sold in 1956. A total of 1¼ billion retail dollars was spent for boats, motors, and their equipment in 1956.

To give a comparison to this boating expenditure, consider that all other amusements put together, including all spectator sports, such as baseball, basketball, football, and boxing; plus all other amusements, such as movies, opera, and the theater, took in only ½ billion dollars more in 1956 than was spent on pleasure boating alone.

It seems to me an industry this large could well afford to make a more careful appraisal of the needs and preferences of the 30 million U. S. sports fishermen. We are not getting a fair shake, and we are about to revolt.

Not only the boating industry has lost sight of the sports fisherman's boating requirements. Here in

Florida, I can name a half dozen million dollar, deluxe, fishing resorts who offer their clientele a miserable collection of boats for fishing that could hardly have been designed to better defeat their own purpose.

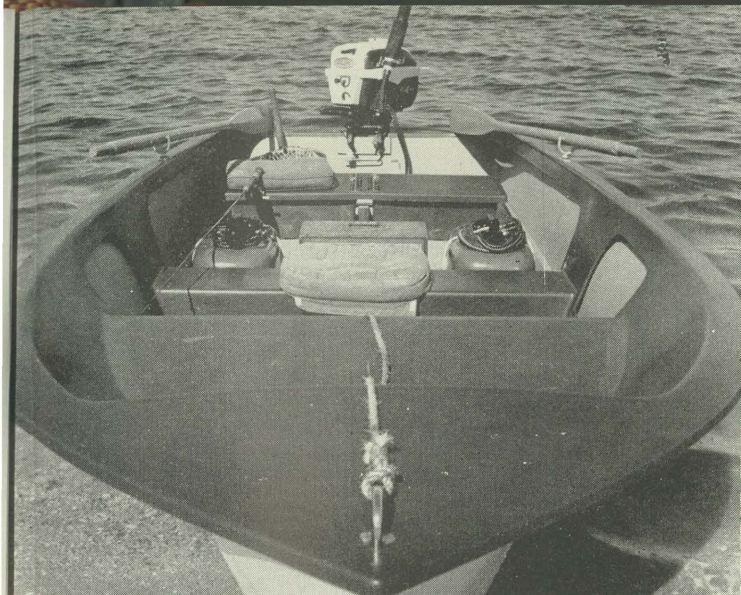
I recently visited one such highly advertised "Million Dollar Fishing Resort," where I couldn't find a boat I considered safe to use. In my book, this doesn't make sense—a million dollars' worth of buildings and a hundred dollars' worth of boats—no wonder we fishermen are up in arms.

Let's consider for a moment the angler's yardstick we spoke of awhile back. Just what does the average fisherman want in his fishing boat? In this piece, we will stick to the outboard powered skiff for all-round use in Florida. Boats for use in the larger categories have long been either privately or semiprivate built.

For the sake of discussion, let's take the angler who wants a fishing boat in the 14-ft. classification, that is, from 13½ to 14½ feet on the center line. The average fisherman wants this boat to handle well with motors from 10 to 18 horsepower. He wants his boat to be as trouble free as possible (he's a fisherman, not a boat mechanic). The boat should not leak, and it should have floor boards to keep his feet and gear out of bilge water taken on thru rain or spray. The boat should row well and tow well. Its design should be such to assure its dry and easy operation in rough going.

A fishing boat should have dry storage for cameras, spare gear, and the like that need to really stay dry. The boat should provide a maximum of nonslip, flat surface for the fisherman to stand or sit on. The boat should be reasonably fast and have maximum stability with foolproof flotation built in. The ideal boat should be heavy enough to provide maximum strength and safety and, at the same time, be light enough for easy loading and unloading with a trailer.

Here are some of the things our fishing boat should not have: windshields, fog lights, steering wheels, electric horns, too many seats, and automobile styling. It should not have slippery decks, upholstery, or noise nuisances, such as, seats that pop. I recall one boat with metal seats that would pop like an explosion with



The author's dream boat, 14½ feet of fishing comfort and convenience. The tackle box, located between the gas tanks, serves as a forward seat when the going gets rough.

the slightest shifting of the sitter's weight. This noise could be heard 3 miles on a calm day.

If you think it's easy to find a boat that measures up to this yardstick, you just haven't tried lately. I used this yardstick in hunting a new boat for myself recently, and I finally found one that measured up perfectly. I'd like to describe this boat here as my idea of the perfect fishing boat—and why.

My new Fiber-Craft Fisherman stands out like a sore thumb when viewed against boats of like size supposedly designed for fishing purposes. The one drawback to my new boat is the time I spend showing it to curious and admiring fishermen, who flock around whenever I take it out—hence, this magazine piece.

The Fisherman was designed by Tom Bennett, of Miami, an avid sports fisherman, and he understands the fisherman's point of view. The craft is designed to operate best within the power range of 10 to 18 horsepower. I'm using an 18 h.p. motor that I feel is perfect for this type boat. It will handle up to 35 horsepower, but on motors of over 18 horses, the angler runs into difficulties. With my 18 horse, I can dispense with forward placed remote controls and steering wheel, which top the list of things I want least in a fishing boat.

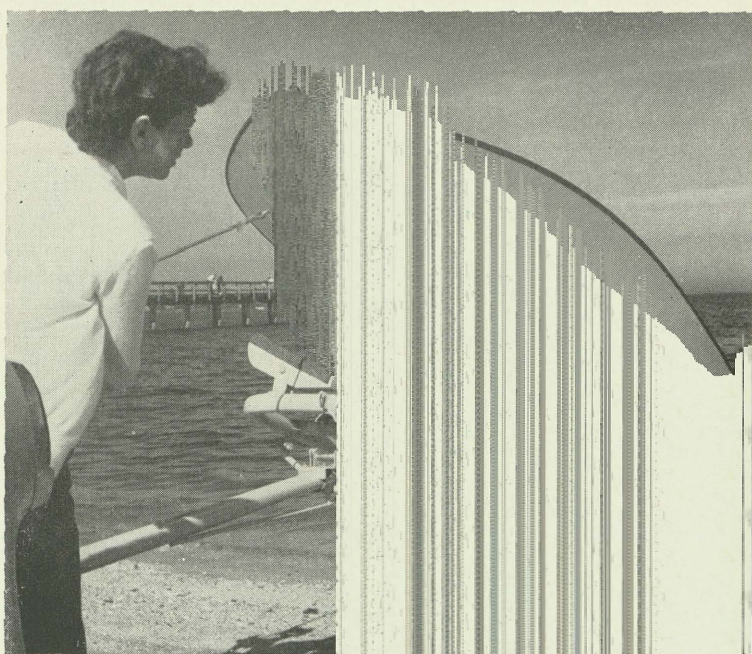
My boat is 14½ feet long on the center line, has 63 inches beam, and 27 inches of freeboard. It weighs approximately 275 pounds. The hull is pressure molded of fiberglass in one solid piece. There are no seams, no screws or bolts. The hull is perfectly smooth inside and out. It can never leak. The color is permanently molded in. It has glass covered air tanks under seats and deck for positive flotation I don't have to worry about.

The casting platform, built into the bow deck, is part of a single piece of molded fiberglass that makes up the gunwales, decks, and seats. The boat consists of just two pieces of molded fiberglass fused together at the gunwale.

On the outside, there is a generous bow flare, molded in spray rails, and offset gunwales to make it the driest small boat I ever used. The bottom design makes her easy in rough water, and her molded-in outside keel makes her tow and row easy as a dream. In fact, this is a dreamy boat for fishing. She wasn't designed for anything else.



Joe Brooks has stuck Buck Rogers with the push pole. The casting platform, built into the bow deck, gives Brooks perfect assistance in spotting, casting to, and playing a bonefish.



The 275-lb. boat is both launched and stored without strain with the tilt feature boat trailer.

Inside the hull, there is a molded fiberglass inner keel and two side stringers, molded under heat pressure to add strength to the hull where it's needed most. I've seen unsupported bottoms in glass boats that worked so much in a chop, you could hardly keep your tackle boxes and gear from jumping overboard.

The inner keel and stringers, also, provide support for full width, glass covered floor boards that run full length of the boat and sit 2½ inches above the bottom—what comfort. In this 14½-foot boat, there are only the rear seat, the middle seat, and the front casting deck. These are all perfectly flat and nonskid. Three people make a crowd in a fishing boat, and two are just right. Why have your boat cluttered up with a lot of seats that have no meaning?

(Continued on Next Page)



Virtue's reward. Buck Rogers poses the bonefish for an instant before releasing it. Notice that Joe Brooks' 200 pounds on the edge of the casting deck heels the boat only slightly.

(Continued from Preceding Page)

Everything about this fishing boat is remarkable, but by far the most outstanding feature is the recessed casting deck built into its bow. The usual bow deck of a fishing boat is about as useless as oarlocks on the Queen Mary. The narrow bow section of a small boat has traditionally been written off by boat designers as beyond hope. Tom Bennett went right ahead and designed a bow that becomes the most interesting feature of his boat. Incorporating flare, beam, and experience, Bennett offers a bow casting deck with 9 square feet of level, nonslide, useable surface. This bow takes all the spill out of boarding the boat and makes a ready seat or casting platform out of space that is wasted in other boats.

My boat has 42 square feet of perfectly level, non-slip fishing surface forward of the rear seat. In fact, it's not possible to stand or sit on anything but flat surfaces anywhere in the boat.

If all the aching hours I've spent standing or sitting in boats with my feet at peculiar and unusual angles were laid end to end, they'd add up to one great big pain all the way up to my neck. I recall one "fishing" boat sold by the thousands that has no flat or level surfaces at all. Even the seats are slightly rounded. It is cruel and inhuman to put a fisherman in a boat where he will have to sit or stand all day with his feet on the bias. There ought to be a law.

The rear seat is a fiberglass dry well, that can be converted into a fish box or live well, with a hinged lid that keeps all water out. This is something I, as well as many other fishermen, always wanted in a boat but seldom got. I need a permanently dry place for my cameras, camera gear, spare tackle, safety equipment, and food. Now I have such a place without sacrificing any room in my boat.

Between the rear seat and the transom, I have a space 16 inches wide by the width of the boat where I keep an icebox, landing net, gaff hook, water jug,

and other odds and ends that usually clutter up the boat. In this behind-the-seat position, such gear is easily accessible while remaining completely out of the way.

The two gas tanks are mounted sitting fore and aft just to the rear of the middle seat. The tanks sit on rubber mats over molded rings and are strapped down to the floor boards to make sure they don't shift or rattle. Strapping down the gas tanks provides added flotation if it's ever needed, and their position in the center of the boat gives the boat better trim regardless of the amount of gas on board.

The oarlocks are mounted in a position that permits easy rowing from either the rear or middle seat, and a pair of light 6½-foot oars handles the boat as easily as a row in the park on a summer afternoon. One of the most puzzling things to me is the almost universal disregard of oarlocks in the average fishing boat. You can look at dozens of different fishing boats before you'll find one that has any oarlocks at all. What's more, if you buy a boat and then install oarlocks of your own, many of them just won't row. Apparently, the designers of many of our fishing boats have never heard of rowing.

Well—what more could you want in a fishing boat? A lot, of course. Reasonable speed? This boat, with two aboard, will do about 25 miles an hour—plenty fast to get us where we're going and to bring us home. A dry, comfortable ride? My boat is the best in this respect I've ever seen. The widely flared bows, that make the casting deck possible, also give me comfort in rough going. Besides, I use a 4½-foot extension handle on my outboard that lets me sit up forward in rough weather, missing even the fine spray (see March FLORIDA WILDLIFE.) Good towing behavior? One Miami sportsman, who takes his deep-sea cruiser to Bimini, regularly tows two such craft over with him for use in the islands. They tow beautifully, even on the Gulf Stream passage.

The Fisherman, used with any power between 10 and 18 horse, has no need for extra gas storage beyond the two Mile Master tanks that hold 6 gallons each. To me, this is a tremendous advantage. The extra gas cans usually necessary for a safety factor are a nuisance and a bother and something I can cheerfully do without.

Have I been too hard on an industry that is, undoubtedly, suffering from growing pains? I don't think so. What Tom Bennett can do with his Fisherman, all manufacturers can do with their fishing models if they so desire. After all, the difference is not so very great, but that small difference in design makes a great big difference in the amount of enjoyment you'll get as a fisherman.

I'm sure our boat manufacturers could design boats that incorporate most of the desirable features I've listed here with little or no problems involved. But will they? As long as we fishermen are content to pay out heavy money for boats that have obviously been designed with an eye on the old catalogs rather than present needs, we can hardly say we deserve any better treatment. But there is a growing revolt afloat. Sports fishermen are beginning to realize they are being forced into an unfamiliar mold formed by the mass buying of a nonfishing, boat buying public.

One famous boat company this year unveiled a 15-ft. outboard complete with raised tail fins a la Detroit. The bow light of this boat is decorated with an 8-carat diamond. List price \$76,000.00 f.o.b.

See what I mean? ●

CHALO NITKA

By MAX HUNN

FLORIDA'S FIGHTING LARGEMOUTH bass which yearly bring thrills to thousands of anglers are honored once a year with no hooks by a unique festival at Moorehaven in Glades County.

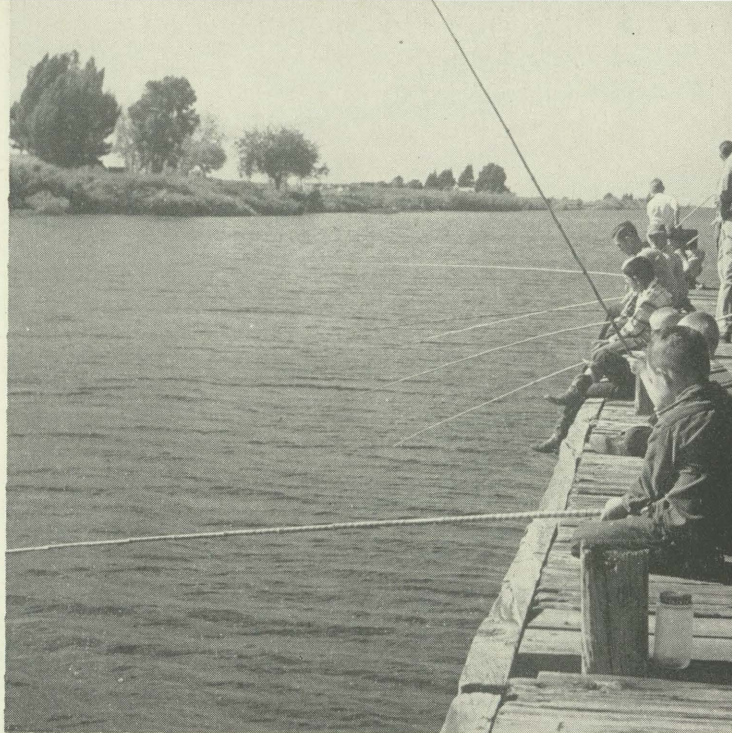
If the lunkers in nearby Lake Okeechobee could understand, they'd learn that it's the only event of its kind in Florida honoring them, and appropriately enough the celebration's title—Chalo Nitka—is from the language of the state's oldest inhabitants—the Seminoles. In the Seminole dialect, Chalo Nitka means day of the bass.

And Chalo Nitka has become an outstanding event. The 1957 celebration—the ninth—was no exception as homefolks and visitors mingled with the Seminoles from the Brighton and Big Cypress reservations in the yearly tribute to the fighting bass.

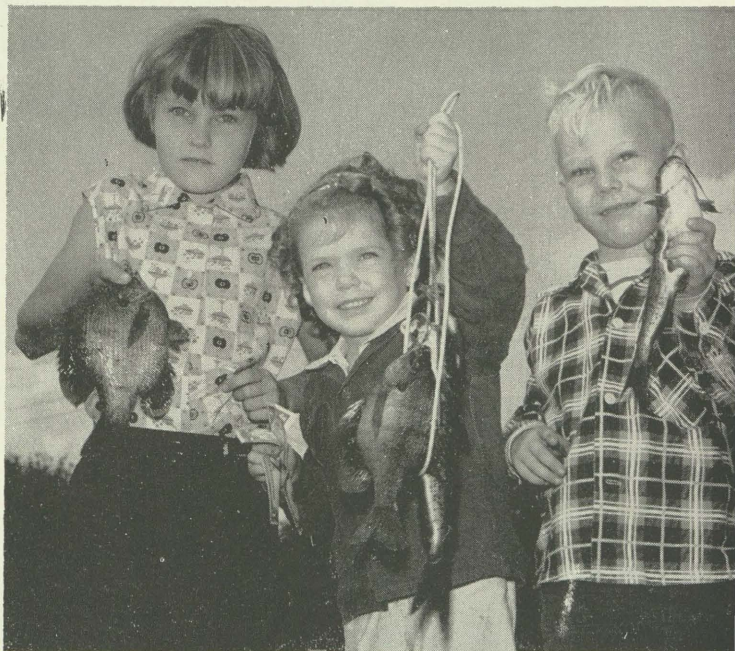
Highlight of the homespun celebration was the crowning of the Chalo Nitka queen—Jo Ann Peebles of Palmdale, and the King of the Bass, the title bestowed upon the fisherman landing the biggest largemouth during the 5-week fishing contest prior to the festival.

This year's king was crowned by proxy. W. Giles Higgins of Lugoso, S. C., won the title by landing a 9¼ pound largemouth while fishing from Sportsman's Village on Lake Okeechobee, but was unable to be present for the ceremonies. His stand-in was Broward Daniel.

Chalo Nitka day was first held in 1949 when Glades County residents decided they needed a festival. Tom Gaskins of cypress knee fame suggested that the festival honor the county's most famous asset—the fighting largemouth bass, and Chalo Nitka—the day of the bass—was born. ●



Cane poles were in evidence during the small fry fishing contest in the Caloosahatchee River as part of Chalo Nitka day at Moorehaven.



Small fry fishing contest winners at Chalo Nitka day were, l. to r. Margaret Randall, Umatilla, largest fish, 10¾ oz. bream; Kandi McCall of Canal Point, most fish, 2 bream and 1 catfish; and John Mark Alderman, Moorehaven, winner in the boy's division.



Above: One of the Chalo Nitka day's features was the singing by the Seminoles in their native dialect.



Right: Jimmy Roland gives pointers on bait casting during his demonstration. He used fly, spinning and bait casting rods.

Signs of Spring

By JOHN H. GERARD



Newly deposited eggs of a leopard frog shown lifted from the water. This frog lays from 3500 to 5000 eggs. Perhaps only one of these eggs will produce a mature frog.

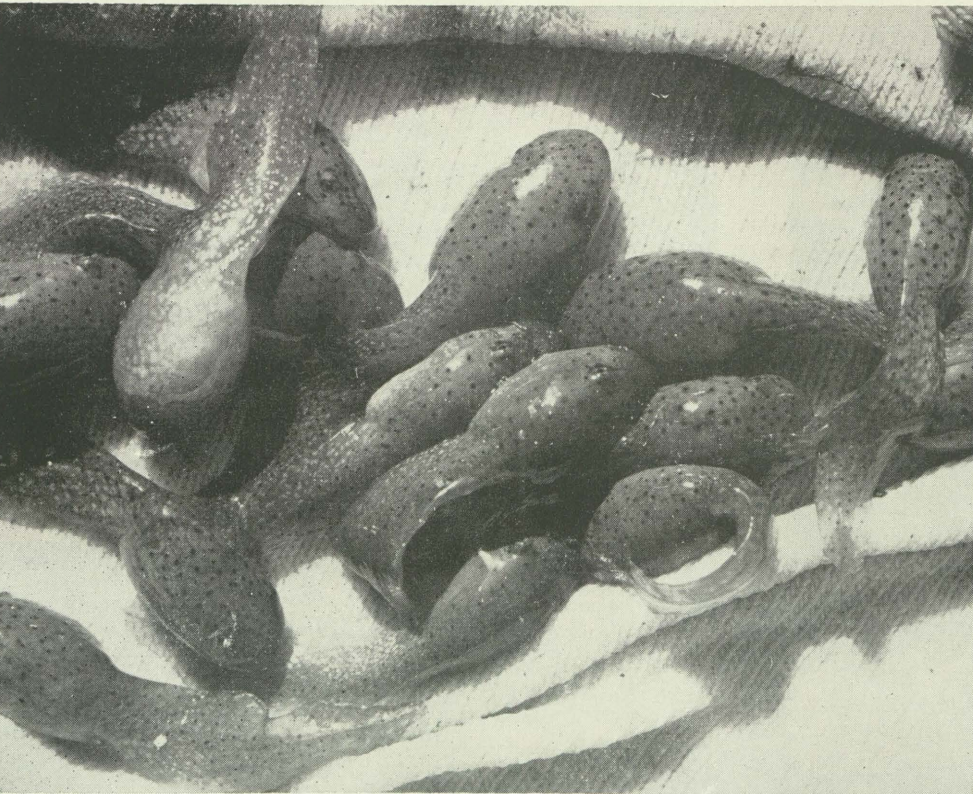
WHILE HUMANS may spend the winter in bright Florida sunshine, most frogs choose to pass the cooler months beneath the dark mud at the bottom of a pond or lake, or under a log on the bank. But frogs are quite hardy creatures and it takes little more than a hint of spring to bring them out of hibernation. Depending upon the part of the country and the temperature, they may emerge from the winter sleep in February, March or April.

The small frogs are the first to stir. Just after coming out of hibernation they head for water, having spent the winter on land under the loose bark of a fallen log or in some such protected spot. They may settle for any wet place during the spring—a shallow reach of a pond or stream, or perhaps merely a puddle of rain water standing in a field.

Here the males set up a terrific din which might be construed as love making. While bullfrogs are solitary lovers, other types may be found singing together in large “glee clubs.” Although the females have a voice it is not often heard. It is the male that develops the throat sac and engages in the spring yodeling. Air is forced from the lungs into the mouth and then into the throat sac. The mouth is closed during the singing and leopard frogs have been observed sounding off underwater, even while sitting on the bottom of a pond.

The calls of various species may be described as whistles, croaks, chirps, trills or bellows. Some frog calls can be heard a mile or more on a calm spring night. Singing is done mostly during the hours of darkness but occasionally a frog, or a whole group of them, may tune up during the daytime, especially if the sky is overcast. In the spring, small hardy frogs may start singing so early the temperature may register no higher than 42 degrees F., and now and again one is found singing when a fringe of ice still borders the pond!

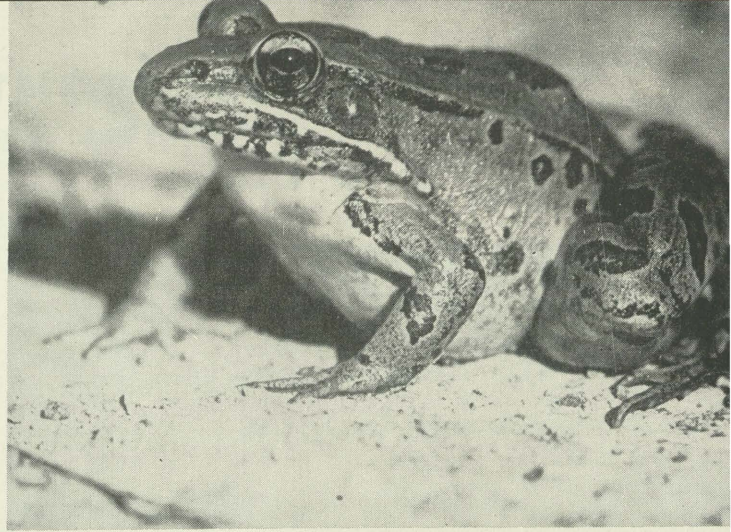
Most frogs have a very short breeding season but some, in warmer climates, are active the year around.



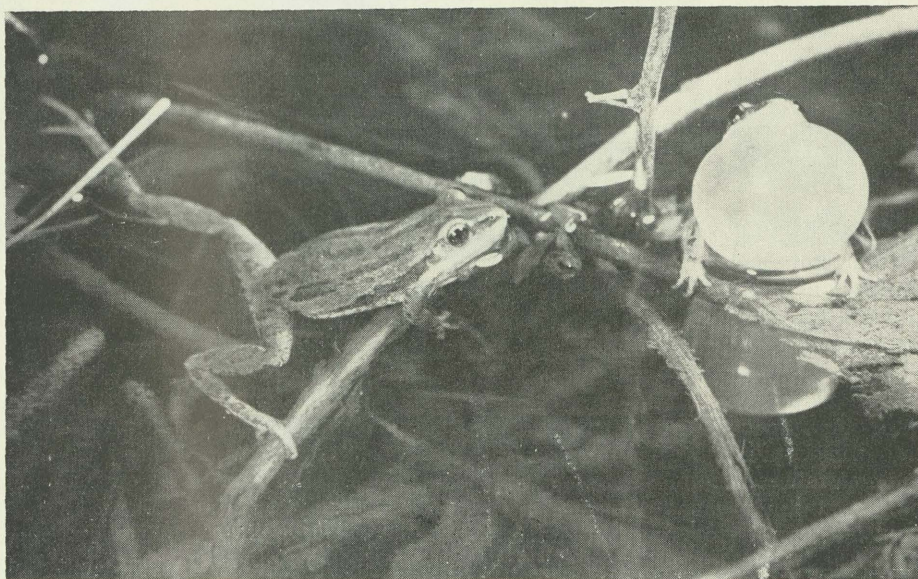
Bullfrog tadpoles are large, measuring from 4 to 6 inches in length during later stages of growth. Since eggs are laid in permanent water, there is less danger of their home drying up. This tadpole, in the north, does not transform into a frog until the second year.



The grown bullfrog. It will not lay eggs until its second year as a frog. Large ones reach 6 inches not including the legs. Females are larger than males in all frogs. Bullfrogs may live as long as fifteen years in a zoo but they would not survive that long under the hazards of the wild.



Mature leopard frog. It may lay eggs when the temperature is as low as 48 degrees F. They are considered suitable fare for humans but are eaten much less commonly than are bullfrogs.



The swamp tree frog is one of the first frogs of spring. The male inflates its throat as it sings lustily in icy cold water. This frog is a poor swimmer and spends much of the year on land. Note hind foot gripping a plant stem.



Spring peeper frog. This tiny amphibian is the first to herald spring. Its call is much like a human whistle. The little rascal with the loud voice can squat on a dime without covering it.

Northern bullfrogs do not feel the stirrings until the water warms considerably with the approach of early summer.

As a general rule the small frogs lay fewer eggs than do the larger species. The eggs are fertilized after they have been deposited by the female. Hatching time varies with the species and the water temperature, requiring from three days to twenty-five days or more. The newly hatched tadpoles swim about by means of their fish-like tails. At this stage they breathe by means of gills. As development progresses, legs form, the tail is absorbed, and the gills are replaced by lungs.

In some species, the egg-to-adult period occupies a matter of weeks, in others the change requires much longer. The bullfrog, in the north, takes two seasons, spending one winter, and rarely two, as a tadpole. The tadpoles usually hibernate in the mud but on rare occasions they have been observed swimming about under the ice of a frozen pond.

Some frogs do not have webbed toes and thus are poor swimmers. These spend their adult life on land

except for the period of egg laying. In summer, leopard frogs often stray far upland but return to water in autumn. The bullfrog has webbed toes, is an expert swimmer, and spends a good deal of the time in the water.

The number of eggs laid each year by different kinds of frogs may vary from 100 or less to as many as 20,000 in the case of the bullfrog. It is a biological fact that animals normally having a low mortality rate of young produce fewer offspring than those subjected to high mortality pressures. Frogs are one of the staple items in the diet of many larger animals. As might be expected, very few of the thousands of eggs produced by frogs ever attain maturity for mortality begins almost as soon as the eggs are deposited. Fish may eat them or they may be attacked by fungus. Tadpoles are eaten in large numbers by insects, fish, mammals, turtles, and birds.

But no matter what vicissitudes beset them, there are always plenty of survivors to harbinge with lusty song the coming of spring. ●

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

GRAND PRIZE



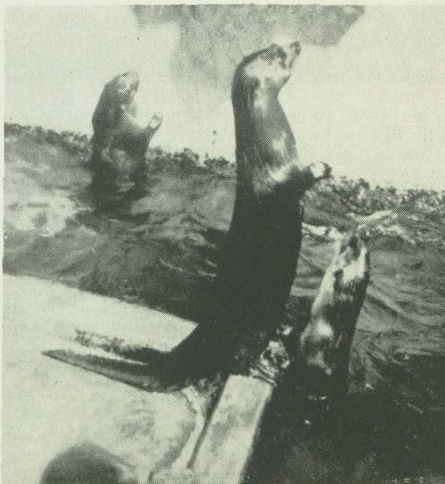
RUSS KELLEHER, Panama City, Florida

Centaure River Spinning Reel, Phantom Tubular Spinning Rod, Gladding Spinning Line, Palco Mess Kit, Squacky Squirrel Call, Shell-O-Matic Cartridge Dispenser, Assorted Fishing Tackle*



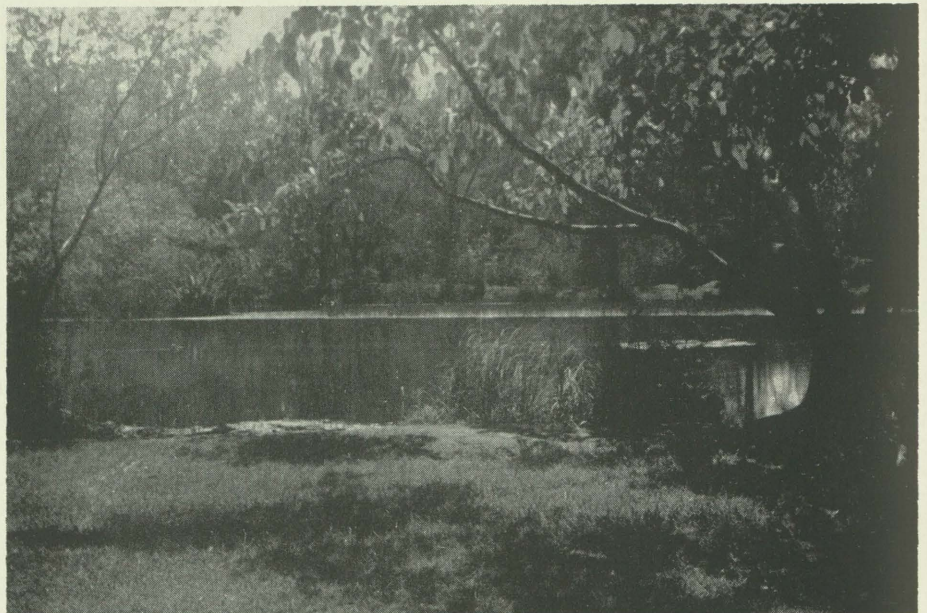
GAIL SAND, Deerfield Beach, Florida

Pflueger Pelican Spinning Reel, Orchard Extendo Fishing Rod, Keiding Bait Bucket, Gladding Spinning Line, Cortland Fly Line, Sunset Line Dressing, Shell-O-Matic Cartridge Dispenser, Squacky Squirrel Call, Assorted Fishing Tackle*



JANITH HOLT, Fort Myers, Florida

Pflueger Skillkast Reel, Ply-Flex Casting Rod, Palco Canteen, Cortland Casting Line, Keiding Bait Bucket, Sunset Line Dressing, Shell-O-Matic Cartridge Dispenser, Squacky Squirrel Call, Assorted Fishing Tackle*



BOB MITCHELL, Coral Gables, Florida

South Bend Casting Reel, Ply-Flex Casting Rod, Cortland Casting Line, Keiding Bait Bucket, Palco Canteen, Sunset Line Dressing, Shell-O-Matic Cartridge Dispenser, Squacky Squirrel Call, Fisherman's Handbook, Assorted Fishing Tackle*

*Assorted fishing tackle includes: Floreo Nylon Jigs, Pflueger Baits, Creek Chub Baits, Spin Dilly Lures, Bridge & Hand Lines, Barracuda Baits & Spoons, Porter Baits, Met-L-Fly Spoons, Boone Baits, Porter Spin Pops, VAL-DO Products, Kingfish Tackle, Potbelly Lures, Chase Tackle, South Bend Rock Hoppers, Getzem Bait Odors, Cane Pole Tackle and Lucky 7 Fishing Leaders and Terminal Tackle Assortments.

MORE PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS ON PAGE 49

O. P. S.

BY FRED TIMSON

THE TIME, January 1956, late afternoon. The place: the boat dock at Winter Garden, on beautiful Lake Apopka, in Central Florida,—to which we had just returned after our several hours fishing trip. A number of tourists crowded around, as we tied up the boat, and stepped ashore with our catch, which consisted of big largemouth bass, and an assortment of smaller fish.

My wife and I,—each carrying a heavy string of fish, proceeded to the fish cleaning bench, with several admiring tourists following close behind. There, I proceeded to draw and fillet our catch, as was my custom, with some of the crowd commenting, or questioning my method, from time to time.

Having finished my work, the fillets being neatly packed in ice,—I turned to the pile of fish backbones and heads, drew my pocket knife,—and started cutting the eyes out of the fish-heads. I noted the strange glances, and that several made wise-cracks,—as to what I was going to do with the eyes.

One man asked, "Why are you cutting out all the eyes"? I answered laughingly, "Because I have O.P.S. beside my name. He asked, "What does that mean"? I replied,—"It means that I am an Optician Piscatorial in Surgery." "Yes",—said he, "but what does that mean"?

The heads of the crowd craned interestedly my way, as I said,—"It means that I am a specialist in surgery on fishes eyes, and that I make things from them."

One fellow said, "Gee, Mister, tell us about it". I told them, "You've all heard the quote, that, 'You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's EAR.' That's true, of course,—but I'm going to tell you folks how I can, and how you can as well, make beautiful, hard, opalescent pearls, from the eyes of any fish."

Exclamations of surprise echoed through the crowd, and they pushed in closer. One fellow evidently doubted my statement, as he said, "He's only kidding us."

This is what I told them. "First,—with a small but very sharp knife,—cut out the eye, being careful not

to stab the knife into the ball of the eye. Second: Holding eye between thumb and forefinger of your left hand,—with the knife, shave off the skin or flesh at the back of the eye.

"Then,—holding the eye with the forefingers and thumbs of both hands,—with the pupil of the eye towards you, press with both thumbs, and a semi-hard greyish, gristly inner eye or eye ball, will squeeze out through the weakened back part of the eye which you shaved off.

"Third:—Put a stew pan on the fire, with about an inch of water in it. With a spoon, place inner eye or eyes therein. Watch it. When it comes to a boil,—time it with watch or clock. When water has boiled for about two minutes,—lift eye from water with a spoon,—place on saucer or cloth. By now, the color of the eye has turned to a pure white chalk color. Also, it has enlarged somewhat, and hardened. True,—the eye does not look like a pearl at this stage. But,—put them or it aside. In 18 to 24 hours look at the eye, and you'll see that it has become a beautiful, and opalescent and hard pearl. If you have made enough of them, you can have a jeweler bore a hole through each one, with the power tool which he has available, you can obtain a nylon thread, and a snap catch, string them, and thus make a lovely graduated pearl necklace.

"Or, you can use the pearls to make a nice set of earrings, or use them for ring settings. Some experimenting is necessary sometimes, to get the proper length of time for each size pearl to be in the boiling water. The smaller ones take less time, and the larger ones should maybe be in the water a half a minute or so longer time. The eyes of any kind of fish will make pearls. Either fresh or salt water fish will make them. Some fish have very large eyes, as the silver king tarpon, and also the black drum and the sporty lady fish. The larger the eye, the larger the pearl naturally. Tarpon eyes, make a pearl nearly an inch in diameter."

NOW,—you know why I told the fellow, that I have O.P.S. after my name. ●

FISHING

(Continued from Page 7)

drives with the rod tips protruding from car windows to vibrate in the wind, you are taking a chance.

If you use your trailer loaded boat as a convenient place to transport your rods, and if you carry your rods on the floor boards in the back of : truck or station wagon, you're asking for trouble. If you allow your glass rods to vibrate in your boat or in any other way, you are contributing to their downfall.

Marching men can destroy a bridge with the vibrations of their rhythmic footsteps. The same bridge

would be safe with many times their combined weight, sans vibration. A high pitched musical note can, with its vibrations, shatter a crystal glass, and vibrations set up in buildings by hurricane winds complete their destruction. Remember, a glass rod is made from fibers held together with glue. It will stand up under usage so severe that it is truly a modern miracle, but just a little of the right (or wrong) kind of vibration can cause a lot of trouble.

Impact is another enemy of glass rods. After all, they are glass. A plate glass window will stand a terrific amount of pressure. It will bend and give and still not break, but it

won't stand much vibration, and it can take practically no impact. So it is with glass rods.

The 3-oz. fly rod that can whip a giant fish in an incredible exhibition of sheer resilience can be laid low by a fall against the sharp edge of a seat or tackle box. It may not break at the moment of fall, but the impact has weakened the fibers for future failure.

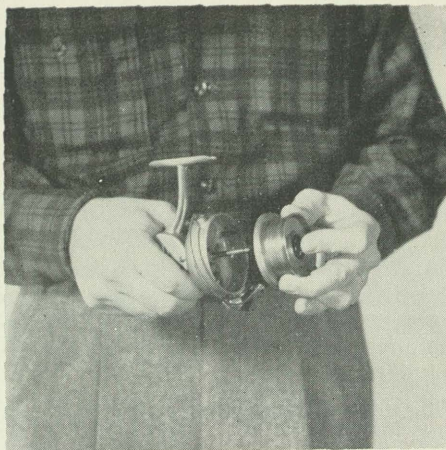
Most fine glass rods are sold in a cloth bag and in a rod case. If you'll keep your rods in these protective coverings when you are not actually fishing with them, you can prevent 90% of your potential rod trouble. ●

SPINNING IN FLORIDA

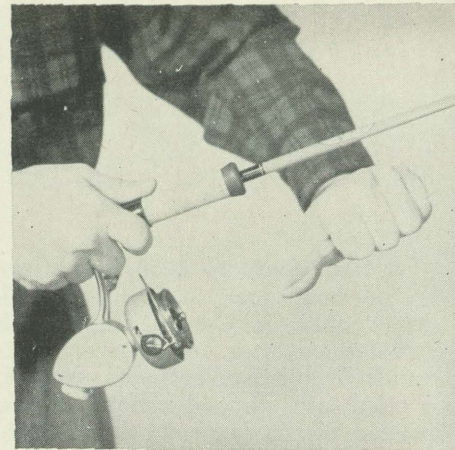
(Continued from Page 9)

to the rod, the line comes off in coils and the first guide takes the coil and each reduces the coil until the line goes out straight and unhampered from reel spool drag. There's the one trick that makes it possible to cast the heavy lures and rigs further and the lightest of lures which could never be used with bait casting rigs go out to unbelievable distances.

In selecting tackle for freshwater fishing, and particularly for Florida fishing, where it will also be used in salt water, the rod should be stout enough to handle the smaller standard and midget plugs and spoons. It can be of tubular glass or bamboo, though the latter is for the fastidious only. In length it should not be less than 6 feet nor longer than 7½ feet. Shorter, they lack sufficient backbone and the needed flippy tip, made to handle the light lures. Flex the rods in the tackle store and find the one which has power down through the center, but flexibility near and clear to the tip. For fresh water angling, specifically, tend toward the lighter side so that you will be able to handle the little lures. Never mind about the weight of the big bass. The lightest rod on the market will more than handle it, because of the advantages already mentioned in the reel drag and extra supply of line. The line, whether it be monofilament or braided, for the spinning reel will handle both, should not test near the strength of the bait casting line you have been using. Incidentally, the reason the line had to be so heavy in bait casting is because the rod would not cushion the pull of the fish, nor could you release line to the quick moving fish as quickly as the built in drag releases it. Where you used a fifteen or twenty pound line before, you can use a four or six pound now and with much more deadliness and, again, versatility in lure weight selection. Why use the lighter line? For one thing, it is less weight for the lure to pull on the cast, so the lighter it is for the light lures, the further they will go. A heavy lure can be cast with light line, but more care is needed not to flip it off. Usually when you shift from a very light lure to a great big bulky plug it is for different fish on a different trip or time of day, and the few seconds it takes to change reel spools is well worth the time. Incidentally, you'll need no leader with monofilament, as the whole line is the leader, acting better on the cast and in the water too, for it has



1. Place the spool selected on the end of the shaft and screw it in tightly. Set the drag by adjusting the drag nut to just under the breaking strength of the line. Any line will break quicker with a short pull due to lack of stretch.



2. The drag adjustment is made best in this fashion. At any time you can change the amount by simply reaching around and resetting even while playing a fish.

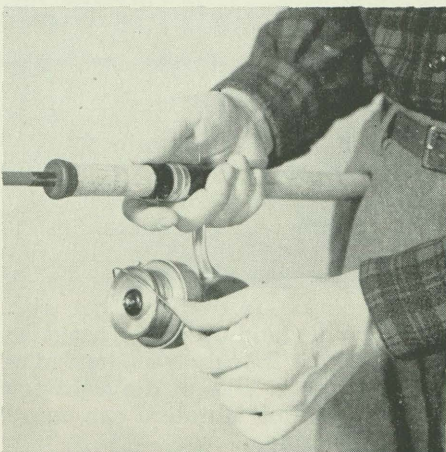
far less resistance than braided line. It requires no care, which is another good point.

In the lure department, you have a wide selection, from midget weight flies, spoons, bass bugs, spinners, clear up to the mighty plugs and heavy spoons for both fresh and salt water fishing. If you are a bait fisherman, anything goes that you have been used to in that department, taking care to balance your light strength to the job at hand. If you will be fishing for instance with a heavy weight in weed beds, still fishing fashion, I recommend a heavier line, for a big fish will snap the ultra light very quickly. If you intend to cast a heavy weight of sinker and live bait, you'll find that spinning tackle will save you a mint on flipped off baits. The long limber rod will be half the help, the relaxed line coming directly from the spool will necessitate less casting pressure to

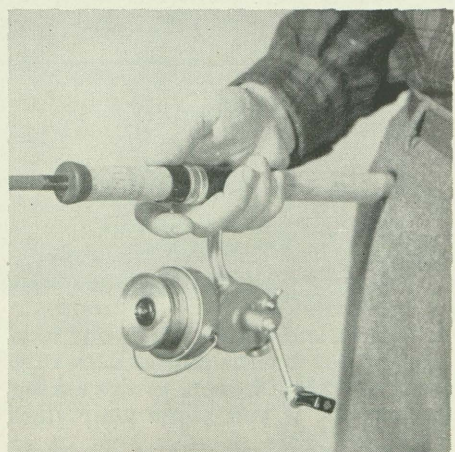
reach the same distance as you did with the old rig. If, however, you are casting for shad or bass and wish to reach out far with a very small lure, the lighter line will be it.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. And proof has it that not only in Florida, one of the last states to really adopt spinning, at least by the residents, but all over the country, the tackle has not only converted the worst of the stubborn diehards, but, thanks to its ease of operation and the fact that a beginner can cast well with it in a matter of minutes, millions of new anglers are on the water having fun and catching fish. To be hard hearted about it for a minute, figure the cost of a trip and then deduct in time the amount spent in untangling backlashes and you'll find that the reel will pay for itself the next time out.

Spinning tackle expensive? NO! When you can pay for one reel and



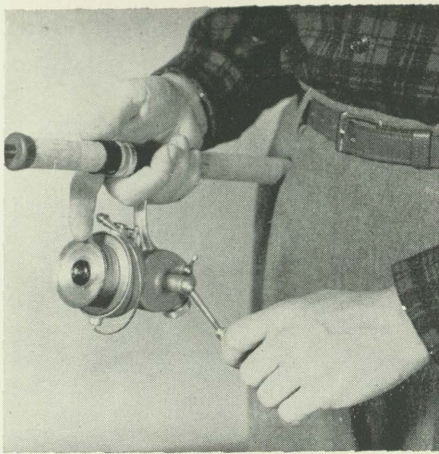
5. Open the bale by flipping it down across the face of the reel until it snaps out of the way. Now the line is perfectly free to fall off the spool as needed, or free to cast.



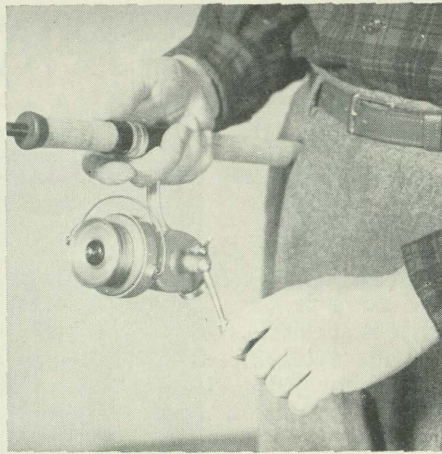
6. Ready to cast. Point the tip of the rod toward the target, holding the line relaxed in the trigger finger. The force of the cast will virtually pull the line away from you at just the right instant.

dog chatter

By GEORGE CROWLEY



3. First step in operation is to extend your trigger finger down and reel the pickup bale around to it so you can pick up the line.



4. Do not hold the line against the rod handle but treat it like the trigger on a rifle—very gently. Then . . .

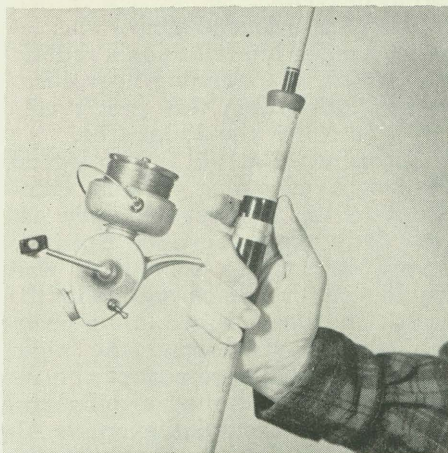
get three or four in the bargain, you've saved money. One spinning reel with two to four spools will handle any fishing condition for any species of fish in America. The rod costs as much as the bait casting one and the line and lures, of course the same. So, when you buy, buy a good one. You'll find that it is easy, far easier to maintain . . . merely keep it oiled.

About the only serious drawback to spinning is the left hand reeling. This you will have to get used to and you can in a very short time, no matter how old a dog you are learning a new trick! When you see that you don't have to constantly switch hands, you'll be glad to learn the new way around.

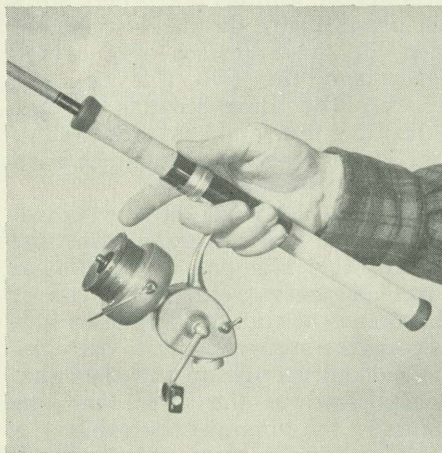
Setting the drag of the reel and getting used to the anti-reverse are more interesting than bothersome. Make it a practice to use the anti-

reverse only when trolling. No longer do you have to worry about the revolving handle. Just set it and forget it, making sure your drag is set just under the near breaking strain of the line. In casting, I never use the anti-reverse until a fish hits, because, by simply holding the handle against the fish's pull, the drag is set in motion and at any time it is possible if you want to, to put on the anti-reverse. Comes in handy when you are fishing along and have to operate the motor or use the paddle.

Spinning is what they say it is with bells on. You'll find this out the very first instant you try it. I'd like to be there to see you land your first shad on a two pound line, your first big bass right after it on the same rig. You'll have the time of your life and won't be able to reach the nearest camera fast enough, to record the act. ●



7. Make the cast by lifting the rod tip up smartly, but without too much pressure to about this position and then flip forward.



8. As you go forward, straighten out the trigger finger and the line will pull away from it and go on its way to the target.

ALTHOUGH stories of dogs' devotion to man are common, stories of devotion to other dogs are rare. However, there is a famous account of an unusual happening of this type that was published in a magazine nearly a hundred years ago, and then in 1954 history repeated itself — this time in Australia.

The old magazine told of two dogs that "were in the practice of going out together to hunt squirrels on the mountain near New York". In pursuit of his quarry, one of the dogs caught his head between two rocks and was unable to free himself.

For the next eight days the other dog tried by signs to bring human help to his trapped friend, but was unable to get anyone to follow him into the woods. When at last help did come they found the trapped dog terribly hurt from efforts to free himself, but alive and far from starved. For he had obviously been well fed — the ground around him was covered with bones and scraps of food that had been brought to him by his pal.

A report from Melbourne published just a couple of years ago told how two collies trapped in an abandoned mine shaft were kept alive by a third collie which carried food to them each day.

Mrs. Irene Hughes, who lives near Melbourne, said that her valuable collies disappeared and, after two weeks, she noticed her third collie leaving the house with a piece of meat in his mouth. She followed and saw the dog drop the food down the shaft. In it were her missing dogs.

* * *

For those who dote on the "shaggy dog story" — and there are some who make a hobby of collecting them — a new booklet is now being passed around. Called "Pardonable Dog Stories" it has been published by Swift & Company and was distributed for the first time at a recent dog show in Miami.

Typical of the stories is this one: A man who looked a little down on his luck walked into a theatrical booking agent with a dog and a monkey. He explained that the dog played the piano and the monkey sang and the somewhat incredulous agent agreed to view the act.

Sure enough, the dog played faultlessly and the monkey sang in a loud

(Continued on Page 50)

Algae—Fresh Water Jekyll and Hyde

EVERY SEASON IT HAPPENS. Often the first the fisheries technicians learn of the occurrence is through one of the Commission's Wildlife Officers who has received a call reporting dynamiting, poisoning, netting or trapping of fish on such and such a lake. Investigation will as likely as not uncover the fact that the person reporting the alleged violation saw a few, or sometimes a great many, dead fish of various species floating about on the surface. No, he did not actually see any illegal netting, trapping or poisoning nor did he hear any dynamite explosions. But what else could cause the loss of so many fish?

A majority of such cases have their basis in a biological phenomenon which, although not uncommon is nevertheless relatively unknown except to the biologist and the exceptionally well-informed sportsman.

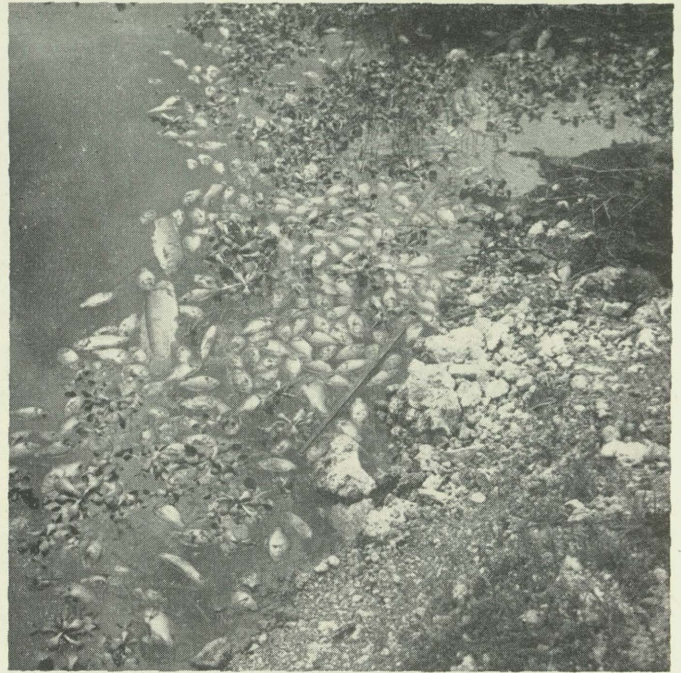
Present in all lakes are quantities of very small, often microscopic, plants representing various groups of algae. During the height of the growing season, these minute plants increase rapidly in numbers, becoming at times so numerous that they impart a characteristic coloration or "bloom" to the water.

As is the case with other chlorophyll-containing plants, algae manufacture carbohydrates, one of the primary divisions of animal food. This process, known scientifically as photosynthesis, is accomplished within the plant by specialized cells which utilize water and carbon dioxide in the presence of sunlight to perform this function.

The seasonal increase in the algal growth is nothing more than the normal pattern for most of Florida's rich lake waters. The algae comprise one of the basic links in the food cycle of aquatic life, a connecting line between the microscopic forms and the prized large-mouth bass and other game fishes.

Fish, like humans, need oxygen to live. Sometimes they are able to exist in waters of very low oxygen content. Should there be a marked and sudden decrease in the available free oxygen content accompanied by a rise in carbon dioxide over any length of time, mass mortality of fishes almost invariably results.

It is certain that fish kills in Lake Crescent, Lake George, and in a portion of the St. Johns River during



In Florida waters, the algae comprise an important link in the food chain between microscopic forms of life and the highly prized game fishes. On the other hand, under certain conditions, algae may cause spectacular fish kills.

the early summer of 1956 were due to the mass mortality of many billions of microscopic algae, the decomposition of which tied up large quantities of the available free oxygen replacing it with carbon dioxide, creating a condition lethal to fish.

Little is known concerning the specific causes of such mass mortalities of algae but it is hoped that future research in Florida waters may unveil the mystery.

In contrast with such spectacular fish kills, an unbelievably large number of fishes die daily under normally healthy conditions. Scavengers and predators are usually able to dispose of the dead fishes before they are seen by man.—mn— ●

EASTER LEGENDS

(Continued from Page 29)

the vine symbolized the complete story of the Crucifixion they named it the passion flower, and explained it this way:

The trifoliate, spear-shaped leaves suggest the spear that pierced Jesus' side, while the five leaflets are the hands of the persecutors. The coiling tendrils of the vine represent the whip with which the Lord was tortured, and the thirty round marks on the underside of the leaves suggests the thirty pieces of silver that were given to Judas for his betrayal of the Lord.

The cup-shaped floral bud is the Holy Grail, and the five petals and the five sepals of even length repre-

sent the ten apostles present at the Crucifixion. (Judas and Peter were not present.) In the three styles are seen the three crosses upon which Jesus and the two thieves died, whereas the three stigmas are the nails, the five anthers the wounds and the stamen is the hammer used in driving the nails.

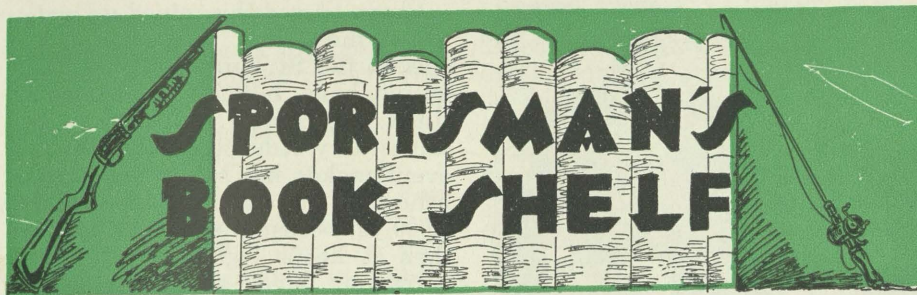
The purple color of the flower symbolizes Christ's robe, and the seventy-two filaments of the flower corolla represent either the halo or the crown of thorns. The stile supporting the stigma suggests the vinegar-soaked sponge on the reed that was offered to the Lord, and the stems of the vine are the reeds.

Following the blossom is the seed-filled fruit, from which comes new life, symbolizing Christ's Resurrec-

tion from death to a more glorious life in heaven.

There is a legend that Judas Iscariot hanged himself upon a redbud tree which was standing near Jerusalem. Since then this pretty tree has been called the Judas tree.

According to an old Indian legend the night blooming cereus came about in this manner: A very ancient lady asked the Good Spirit to permit her to do something that would comfort Jesus while on the cross. She was changed into a beautiful flower and during the night while all other flowers slept she remained open and shed a delightful fragrance all around the cross. Although the flower drooped with the first rays of the morning sun, it had fulfilled a desire. ●



VASTNESS OF THE SEA by Bernard Gorsky. Published by Little, Brown and Company, 34 Beacon St., Boston, Mass. 305 pages, photos. Price \$5.00.

This is the vividly recorded story of four daring Frenchmen who came as close as men can to becoming creatures of the sea. On a voyage of adventure that carried them 15,000 miles across some of the earth's remotest tropical waters, they swam in pursuit of huge mantas and leopard rays, hunted and were hunted by sharks and barracudas, and caught in magnificent photographs the incredible color and variety of the life of coral reef and sea floor.

Led by Bernard Gorsky, the quartet sailed westward from Tangiers to Tahiti, exploring with masks, flippers, cameras and spears the underwater seascapes of every ocean on their way. Fabulous places well off the beaten track fill the log of their journey: the Canaries, Martinique, the Grenadines, Kingstown, Bird Island, World's End Reef. And in the Pacific, there were the Galapagos, their jump-off spot for the 3,000 mile crossing to the Marquesas and Tuamotus, where they lived and dived with the easygoing islanders. The resultant story rivals that of the *Kon-Tiki*. It takes the reader into a fascinating world so far from everyday experience that it could be part of another planet.

The narrative of the journey has the authentic tang of high adventure. The reader sees undisturbed regions where no man ever dived before, where sharks cruised so gracefully one could almost forget the danger. With them one stalks the multi-colored parrot fish grazing in fields of fire coral or spears moray eels in sea grottoes or swims with playful seals. There's a world of fantastic variety and splendor and sometimes, in the blink of an eye, of stark terror.

It is all here, the pleasures of many friendly ports and welcoming tropical islands, the beauty and danger and exaltation of the sea, both above its surface and beneath it, told by a born writer who, like Melville or Conrad, happened to be born adventurer as well.

THE GUIDE TO JAVELINA by Ralph A. Fisher, Sr. Published by The Naylor Company, San Antonio, Texas. 208 pages. Price \$3.75.

Hunting the javelina, the little big game of the southwestern states and Mexico, is a specialized phase of rifle sport. Ralph Fisher, Sr., an Arizona hunting guide, puts the reader in the field on numerous hunts for the pocket edition porkers of the desert, canyon and mountain country.

The author goes into detail describing the preparations and conduct of the hunt and takes you, the reader, right on the ground, reporting on the individual event. The true sportsman, with his fondness for the out-of-doors and his keenness for the trail, will value the author's method of telling the story of the hunt; the kind of equipment necessary; the guns to use, and the normal, sensible precautions to be observed in the javelina's favorite country.

Mr. Fisher gives simple directions for preparing the meat for the pot—or for the oven.

The emphasis here is on the javelina; but every real sportsman will read with mounting heartbeat the encounters with rattlesnakes, coyotes, white-tails, elk, and that beautiful and crafty killer, the cougar.

If you are a hunter to whom distant pastures hold appeal, Fisher's javelina book makes for enjoyable and informative reading.

* * * *

THE COMMUNITY OF LIVING THINGS IN CITY PARKS AND HOME GARDENS by Robert S. Lemmon. 200 pages, 100 photographic illustrations. Price \$6.95.

People who live in cities have many opportunities to observe and understand the activities of nature's world. In every community there is a green area in the form of a park, a square, a street lined with trees, or a backyard garden or lawn. Most households even nurse a few indoor or windowsill plants to enjoy the beauty of their unfolding leaves and opening flowers.

In this book, the author presents the kinds of birds, insects, plants, and

other forms of life that are usually to be found in urban and suburban areas. There exists in such areas—as in the woods and meadows—a community of soil, plants, small creatures, birds, and mammals, some helping the others and all of them independent in some fashion.

It is interesting to learn to recognize the changes that take place each season in your own city patch of green. Look for the changes that spring, summer, autumn, and winter bring. Watch for the displays of fine flower exhibits; learn to identify the shrubs and trees which have been brought over from other countries and which thrive in your neighborhood; and be on the alert for the arrival of migrating birds that stop over in your trees to rest and feed.

Mr. Lemmon has brought into sharp focus many of the fascinating stories that are unfolded in city parks and home gardens. Here, indeed, is an invitation to many hours of pleasure and instruction.

* * * *

THE COMMUNITY OF LIVING THINGS IN THE DESERT by Alexander and Elsie Klots. Published by the Creative Educational Society, Inc., Mankato, Minn. 200 pages, 100 illustrations. Price \$6.95.

This is another of the books in the five volume series on nature and specific natural communities. The full page documentary photographs with accompanying text gives an excellent insight into the life of the country's arid lands—the birds, mammals, insects, and plants.

In the foreword, Edwin Way Teale says, "The desert, to the average person, signifies a dry and barren and lifeless area. Dry it is. Barren it may appear. But it is not lifeless. Not only is the desert the home of a surprising variety of plants and animals but they include some of the most unusual and interesting species on earth. Special adaptations and abilities enable them to endure amid their harsh environment with its sparse vegetation, its infrequent rains and its violent fluctuations of temperature."

In this introduction to deserts and the life of the deserts, Alexander and Elsie Klots have presented the background material needed to make clear the causes of desert, the conditions of life that prevail there and the whole interrelated activity of the plants and animals of these dry lands. The web of desert life is one of the most fascinating fields of study for the naturalist interested in the relationship of living things to their environment. ●

MIXED-UP ST. LUCIE

(Continued from Page 19)

that, if he is a fisherman, he is keeping an eye on you at the same time.

The canal's miles of banks offer wonderful sport for the cane poler, who has my profound respect. He is an artist in his own right and those who are contemptuous of him have forgotten their beginnings.

Newt Chase of Stuart, strictly a wispy cane pole man, brings back strings that turn me green with envy and I say that Newt has actually accomplished more on his slender cane with limited length of mono when he lands a 6-pounder than I have on the same sized fish with unlimited line.

The canes really come into their own in mid-winter and spring each year when thousands upon thousands of specks make their spawning run into the canal from Lake Okeechobee at Port Mayaca. The run turns into a regular Cracker jamboree. There will be families with tow-headed kids by the half dozen, blue eyed, energetic grandpas with tobacco-dribbled whiskers, Ma, Pa, and the neighbors down the way, all catching fish and having a glorious time. If the specks aren't biting you'll hear remarks like "the moon's



Black bass and snook from the South Fork directly east of St. Lucie Canal.

all wrong," or see some old timer hoist his minnow, regard it speculatively, and then spit on the bait. That's a rewarding and reassuring sight in this atomic age.

Sometime during the day the specks are bound to bite and everybody goes off toting limit or near limit strings, but what they do with them is past me. In my book, anyone who can eat two speckled perch at a sitting is a hero.

I have cussed this mixed-up water when the U. S. Engineers have opened the St. Lucie spillways and let us have billions of gallons of silted water, sand and mud in our salt estuary. Admittedly this dreaded event makes hot snook and tarpon fishing in the churning millrace for 1,000 yards east of the spillways, but then it keeps right on going and turns our famed salt water fishing grounds at Stuart into mud soup—with resultant howls that can be heard as far as Washington.

Please, Mister U. S. Engineers, work out your long-range plans for Lake Okeechobee levels so that we Crackers can keep the canal fishing and the sports can still have their tarpon fishing and everybody will be good friends forevermore.

And I have loved this mixed-up water on evenings such as one I enjoyed three weeks ago, when I went out deliberately to catch channel cats and returned with: two croakers, a two-pound mangrove snapper, a four-pound snook, three skillet-sized blue-nosed bream, and one mullet that broke the rule and picked up a worm off the bottom. What you'll catch is unpredictable but, if you're versatile, there's this for sure—you will catch fish! ●

GRASS FLAT BASS

(Continued from Page 11)

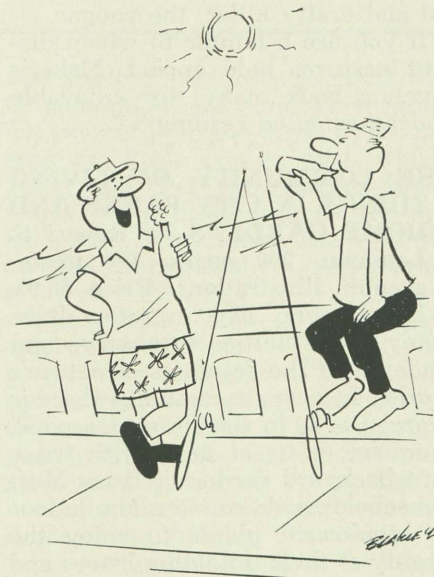
slowly he would paste it.

On some extremely windy days, I have found a small silvery plug yanked across the tops of waves to be by far the best lure in the box.

The old-fashioned sub-surface torpedo plug with spinners fore and aft has probably caught as many big ones as anything else. It does most of its grass flat damage when reeled so near the surface it actually makes a tiny wake. It is a hanging-up, grass-pulling so-and-so if you let it sink and it collects more than its share of trash, even when worked properly but a couple of 10-pound bass will make you extremely tolerant of its shortcomings.

Spinners, bucktails and porkrinds in various combinations are sometimes good, dredged right through the grass. They have the advantage of being brought very close to the fish that is lying near the bottom and they have the disadvantage of very limited visibility for fish some distance away.

On the calmer days, surface plugs, worked slowly, are the most fun of all. Most bass fishermen have had good days with surface lures, even



"What I like about fishing is it makes you hot and thirsty."

when the surface is choppy, but there is a special factor in grass flat fishing. A dozing bass submerged in a patch of eel grass can't see but a small surface area above his head and if the surface is rough he probably won't even notice a surface plug some distance away. When all is still, the plug's disturbance is more likely to produce results.

It is a safe rule to work your surface plug briskly on windy days and very gently when it is calm. If your ulcers will allow you to relax that long, you'll cash in on calm days by letting your surface plug lie motionless for two or three minutes at a time.

On the plug rod, the line should be at least 12-pound test for grass flat work. The rod should have backbone because you need good-sized plugs and occasional rough work on heavy fish. Then too, there are many times when you have to reel in a gob of grass.

The flyrod works fine with surface bugs on quiet days and big near-surface streamers are good. I use the flyrod most of the time because I

like to fish that way but my fish run smaller than those of my plug-casting friends. The flyrod is very frequently the champ in warm weather but I must bow to the short rod for early spring fishing.

Spinning tackle will work, of course, but the disadvantage here is that it must be rather heavy for successful big fish angling in grassy waters and I have never acquired satisfactory skill with really heavy spinning tackle.

Grass flat fish will move before a boat. Don't use the motor except when you have to. Shoreline casting with an idling outboard is fine if the boat is over deep water but even a cautious oar or paddle will send them on their way on a shallow flat.

If you use a boat and there's any breeze or current at all, drift the flats. If the breeze is too brisk, drag something to slow you down. Bob Budd and Dr. Wilber use sash

weights on short lengths of line. They don't pick up much grass; they don't scare your fish because they're on the upwind side of the boat and the casts go the other way.

Most good grass fishermen cast first to the edge of visible grass clumps and if that brings no action, they throw right into the grass.

There is a trick to playing bass in spotty grass areas. Once you think about it, it's simple. The rule is to bear down on him when he goes away from you and not to hurry him when he comes toward you.

You see, when he comes your way of his own accord, he often picks his way around thick grass. If you haul on him, you're apt to pull him into some grass he was planning to avoid.

The exception to the rule is when he decides to burrow into the grass for safety but that is a chance you have to take and, if he's big, you probably can't plane him over it anyway.

Keep your boat casts fairly long—more than 70 feet if possible. Admittedly this presents more hazards in playing a fish and a fouled lure must be dragged that much farther but the long casts will get you more strikes in the long run. It's shallow water and the fish are probably pretty well scared out within 30 feet of the boat.

In wading, you work more deliberately and the long throws are not so important.

Flocks of coot, usually plentiful in the early spring in this area, are good grass bed markers. You can almost bet on grass where you see a concentration of them.

Now we haven't talked about the bonnets and we haven't mentioned coantal moss areas. Remember, we were referring only to eel grass flats.

If you want a prize-winning bass on artificials, there's no better way.

JR. CONSERVATIONIST

(Continued from Page 5)

Vice President — Don McGraw

Secretary — Ernest Davis

Treasurer — George Etheridge

Sgt. at Arms — Billy Petty

Additional members are Glenn Cooper, Jr., Ray Cooper, and Larry Turner.

* * * * *

OKALOOSA COUNTY — I have been told that the Lions Club of Baker is to sponsor a Youth Conservation Club there in conjunction with the high school. Preparations are now being made to have an organizational meeting to elect officers.

* * * * *

Since our last issue, an Advisory Committee has been appointed in Marion County for the purpose of creating the degrees which our youthful conservationists will strive to attain during the summer camp. These seven degrees are as follows:

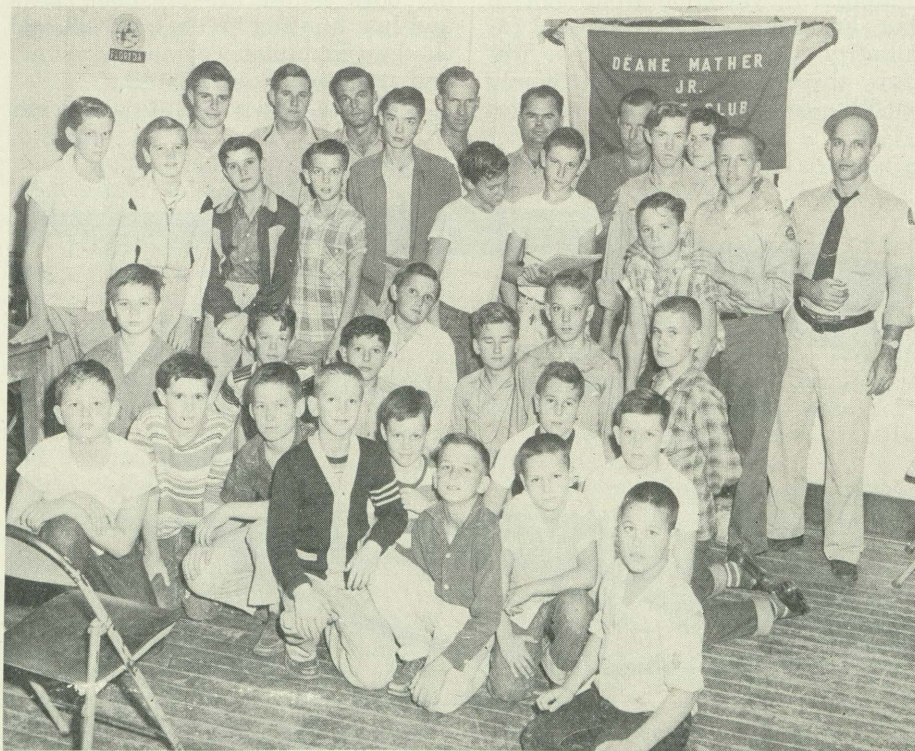
The first degree which a youngster will receive is the Degree of the Possum. The second is the Degree of the Gopher (Tortise); the third, the Degree of the Alligator; the fourth, the Degree of the Raccoon; the fifth, the Degree of the Fox; the sixth, the Degree of the Otter; and the highest degree to be earned is the Degree of the Panther.

Each degree will be an Order in itself. All Orders (degrees) will have their own secret rites. These

degrees may be earned only at summer camp and will be available to both members and non members.

The ages 8-11 will be called the pre-degree, and, if they wish, they may work toward the first degree; however, in order to receive the first degree they must have reached the age of 12.

At the present time the advisory committee is working on these degrees, and have recommended certain requirements for each Order. These recommendations will be presented to the Board of Directors of the State League which will convene at Camp Eaton March 2 and 3.



Members of the Deane Mather Junior Wildlife Club at a recent meeting in their club house. Photo by Jim Reed.



muzzle flashes

By EDMUND McLAURIN

ADMITTEDLY, today's marksmen are favored with better guns and ammunition and have the added advantage of increased firepower—but the majority of powder burners of yesteryear undoubtedly were more intimately and beneficially acquainted with their weapons.

Often, of necessity, one gun had to serve its owner in many different ways and frequently. This group of gun owners usually knew their weapons well and how best to use them.

Essentially, present-day, serious small bore tournament competitors and bench rest shooters are remaining examples of former period one-gun marksmen. They may own other firearms, but it is almost a sure bet that they know best how to use their competitive weapons. Familiarity with their guns pays off in higher scores, for their specialized sports call for them to make a single shot as perfect as possible and then to repeat gun hold, sight picture and applied trigger squeeze with the minimum of variation from shot to shot. From close association and familiarity with their selected firearms, these shooters are extremely sensitive to any mechanical changes

in their equipment and variations in the use thereof. Let a trigger pull develop even an infinitesimal "creep" or drag, or let a sling strap be inadvertently adjusted one notch too loose and they are conscious of it right away.

The idea of matched equipment is also given recognized value in the competitive handgun shoots, where match courses may require firing with weapons of .22, .38 and .45 calibers. Whenever possible, shooters invariably try to use gun models that give the same feeling of gun weight, balance and handhold.

Unfortunately, a modern firearm, influenced by special laws and customs governing its use, cannot be an all-purpose weapon. You cannot legally hunt Florida deer with a .22, or shoot migratory waterfowl and doves with a rifle, or deer with a handgun!

Like a dentist, you need a special instrument for each job — which means a rim fire .22 for informal target shooting and squirrel hunting, a big bore center fire for deer, bear and hog hunting and a smoothbored shotgun for upland game, waterfowl and trap and Skeet shooting.

It is wise, and a definite aid to ex-

pert marksmanship, to match one's sporting firearms so that they possess common mechanical functioning, weigh approximately the same and feel and align much alike. For example, if you shoot, say, a Winchester Model 61 or 62 slide action .22, you can wisely select a slide action big game rifle and a similar type of shotgun. The additions need not necessarily be of the same make, although preferably so, for reasons of probable common design and duplicated mechanical operation.

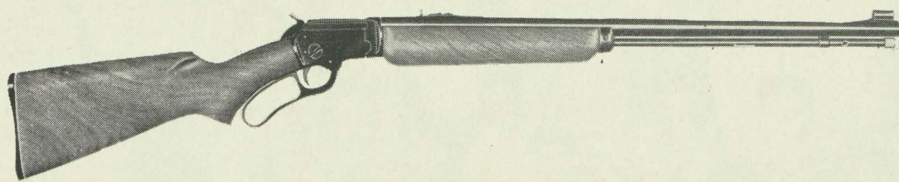
Where a presently owned single firearm is a big game rifle, the owner can get valuable low cost range practice and enhanced familiarity with its particular type of action by adding a .22 of similar mechanical functioning. A Marlin 336 lever action deer rifle, for example, could be teamed with a Marlin 39A, so that use of one would augment skill with the other. The same idea can be worked in reverse — the squirrel hunter owning a Marlin 39A adding a Marlin 336 to his arsenal for big game hunting.

What with the budget-suited time payment plans now made available to sportsmen by manufacturer-retailer agreements, acquisition of a matched set of small bore rifle, big game rifle and shotgun — at least, in respect to similar mechanical operation — is both financially possible and logical.

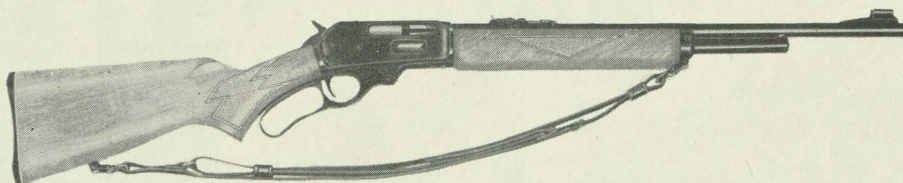
Certain types of gun actions are better suited to some shooters than others. Natural left-handers, or normal right-handed persons possessing a left master eye, generally find a bolt action slow and awkward for anything other than deliberate slow-fire. For them, the autoloaders, slides and lever actions in rifles, and similar actions and double-barrel styles of shotguns, usually are more enjoyable to shoot.

Reviewing the available models, how can modern guns be matched advantageously?

In the category of autoloaders, .22 caliber models like the Winchester 77 and 03; Remington's new 552 and older 550A, 241 and 24 models; J. C. Higgins (Sears, Roebuck-High Standard-made) Models 31 and 29; Stevens 87; Savage Model 6; the Browning .22; Marlin's Model 88C, and Mossberg Models 151 and 152 can be teamed with large caliber autoloaders as found among the Remington 740 in .30-06 and .308 Winchester calibers; the Winchester 07 in .351 caliber, and sporting modifications of the military Garand .30-06 and the questionably effective (for large game) .30 caliber Army carbine. Companion smoothbores can be chosen from among the Reming-



MARLIN 39A—.22 CAL.



MARLIN 336—BIG GAME

The Marlin lever actions in .22 caliber and .30-30, .32 Special and .35 Remington calibers team up admirably — or you can match them with one of the lever action Winchester Models 94, 64 and 74, or Savage Model 99, big game rifles of equally fast lever action functioning.

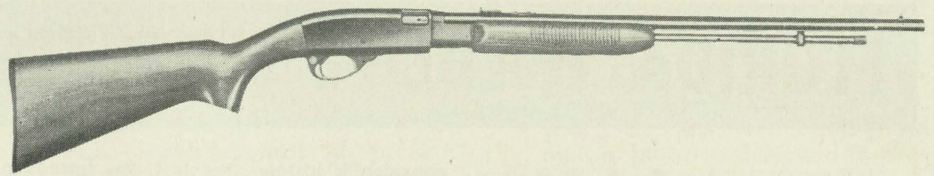
ton 58 and 11-48 models; the Winchester Model 50; the Browning autoloaders of both hump-back and modern streamlined receiver designs; the J. C. Higgins Model 60; Savage Models 775SC and 755, and the foreign Franchi and Breda automatics.

Slide action .22's, as represented by the Winchester Models 61 and 62; Remington 572 Fieldmaster and its predecessors, the 121 Fieldmaster and Models 12A and 12C; the Savage 29G; J. C. Higgins Model 33; the Noble, and the Harrington & Richardson Model 422 can be matched with both big bore slide action rifle models and pump action shotguns. Remington makes the Model 760 slide action big game rifle in .30-06, .300 Savage, .270 Winchester, .257 Roberts, .35 Remington and .244 calibers. Shotguns of similar, slide action functioning can be selected from among the Remington 870 Wingmaster and the earlier Model 31; the Winchester Models 12 and 97; Ithaca 37; J. C. Higgins Model 20; Harrington & Richardson Model 400; Stevens Model 77, and the Mossberg 200K.

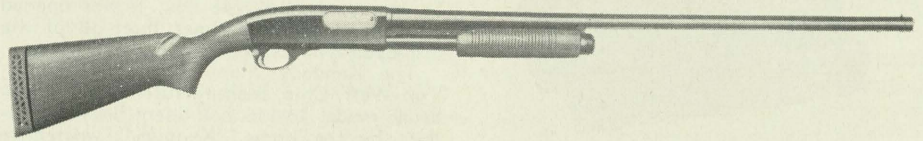
The lever action Marlin 39A pistol grip and straight grip Mountie styles .22 caliber rifles, and the new Marlin 56 short-throw Levermatic, have numerous possible companions among the big game rifle listings. Winchester makes the Models 94 and 64 in .30-30 and .32 Winchester Special calibers; the Winchester Model 71 in .348 caliber, and the Model 88 in .308, .358 and .243 calibers. Marlin lists the Model 336 in .30-30, .32 Special and .35 Remington calibers. Savage chambers its famous lever action Model 99 in .250-3000, .300 Savage, .308 Winchester and .243 Winchester calibers. Johnson's Kenai (a Winchester Model 71 converted to .450 Alaskan caliber) is also of lever action type.

There is not an American-made lever action shotgun among the currently manufactured crop of smoothbores, to this editor's knowledge. However, there have been several, the most successful being the John M. Browning-designed Winchester Model 1887. The action was simple and rugged and the weapon loaded five shells — four in a magazine under the barrel and one in the carrier. These guns were made in 10 and 12 gauges, with rolled steel barrels, and many thousands were sold between first marketing and discontinuance, in 1919, some 32 years later. Many are still seeing service.

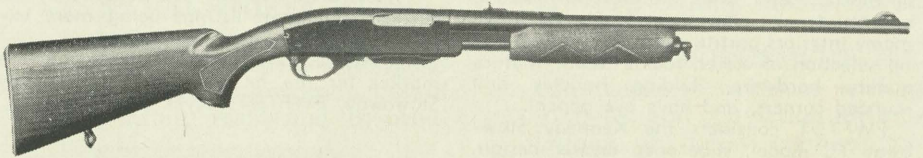
Available bolt action rifles of the .22 and big bore groups are too numerous to list fully. Most famous of the .22's are probably the Win-



REMINGTON 572—.22 CAL.



REMINGTON 870—SHOTGUN



REMINGTON 760—BIG GAME

Where the scope of your shooting activity requires the use of several guns, it is wise to match gun action designs, for faster handling and fewer misses. Note how the contours and general features of these Remingtons are common in .22 caliber rifle, big game rifle and shotgun.

chester 52, Remington 37 and 513T target rifles.

The same is true of the large caliber bolt actions. Many fine models exist, the more famous probably being the Winchester Model 70; Remington Models 721 and 722; Marlin 455; Weatherby 48; J. C. Higgins Models 51 and 52, and the foreign F. N. Mausers, Sakos, Mannlicher-Schoenauer and Husqvarna manufactures, made in a wide choice of calibers.

Bolt action shotguns are Mossberg Models 185D, 190 and 195D; Stevens Models 58 and 59; Marlin Model 55; J. C. Higgins Model 10, and the Harrington & Richardson Model 349 — if you want to carry the bolt action theme into the shotgun category.

For the pistol shooter, Smith & Wesson markets the K-.22 Masterpiece and the K-.38 Special revolver models in almost identical weight and design. Similarly, the Colt Officer's Model Match .22 caliber revolver can also be had in .38 Special caliber.

The Government Model .45 and Super .38 Colt autoloaders can be duplicated in the small bore Colt Ace .22 or used with a Colt conversion unit. The adapter unit is designed to permit owners of either the .45 Colt automatic or .38 Super automatic model to convert these handguns for practice shooting with less expensive .22 caliber ammunition.

Quickly interchangeable without tools, the conversion unit utilizes the less powerful .22 cartridge, but incorporates a recoil booster that steps up the .22's recoil to approximate the effect and feel of the .45 automatic and .38 Super cartridges.

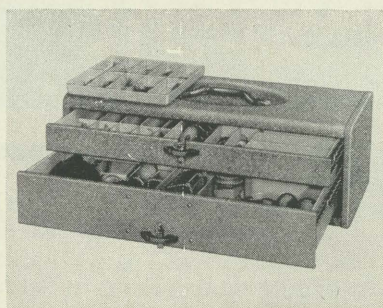
Another, and remarkably similar, big bore autoloading pistol that can be profitably paired with the .22 caliber Colt Ace as a separate, companion weapon is the foreign Llama automatic that looks like a reduced version of the Colt .45 automatic. The Llama is made in .32 and .380 calibers.

The German 9mm Luger and the similarly balanced, American-made .22 caliber standard model Ruger, or the CO₂ gas-powered Carbo-Jet American-Luger, Model HV-822, will provide both big bore and small bore shooting for handgunners who prefer the original Luger's distinctive frame shape.

The Ruger Single Six .22 caliber revolver and the Ruger .44 Magnum or Ruger Black Hawk .357 Magnum can be advantageously matched. Identical handguns in several calibers are available in the Great Western Frontier Sixshooter in .22, .38 Special, .357, .44 Special and .45 calibers.

Where the scope of your shooting activity requires the use of several guns, it is wise to match gun actions — for fewer misses! ●

FLORIDA WILDLIFE FIELD TESTS AND TELLS



TACKLE BOXES can be had in a variety of shapes, sizes and colors, in metal, wood or plastic. Best ones are desirably strong and sturdy, yet convenient to handle; have roomy interiors partitioned to provide fingertip selection of stored tackle items; feature quality hardware, folding handles and rounded corners, and have eye appeal.

FWFT&T considers the Kennedy Stowaway TC model, slide-open drawer design, tackle box a very practical item for active Florida fishermen.

Obviously designed by fishermen, to make fishing more fun, the Kennedy Stowaway, available in two sizes, has many good features to qualify it for editorial endorsement by FWFT&T.

In addition to good designing, quality materials and plenty of eye appeal, the Kennedy Stowaway tackle box stores tackle in the most convenient way—in slide-out drawers that stay locked until deliberately opened for finger-tip selection of tackle. Drawers have stops that prevent them being pulled out too far, with resultant dumping or bouncing of contents.

When not in active use, the Kennedy Stowaway can be pushed under a boat seat by folding the handle into a recess in the top of the box. It can also be made to serve as an extra seat.

The Stowaway's interior is watertight to the tops of drawers, and all available sizes feature high impact plastic, multiple compartment interiors. For rubber-like or Vinyl lures and baits, there is a special lift-out tray made of special material impervious to any possible corrosive action from such lures. The total number of provided compartments, in their different sizes and shapes, will hold all the plugs, flies, line and reels you can expect to use. FWFT&T considers the Stowaway the perfect box for storing freshwater casting, fly and spinning gear.

Made in the following catalog listings:

Model Number	Size
TC14 (Steel)	14x8 3/8x6 3/4
TC20 (Steel)	20x8 3/8x6 3/4
TC14-AL (Aluminum)	14x8 3/8x6 3/4
TC20-AL (Aluminum)	20x8 3/8x6 3/4

Aluminum models TC14-AL and TC20-AL are finished in light blue ripple baked enamel. Models TC14 and TC20, the steel body numbers, are finished in rich dark brown ripple enamel. FWFT&T recommends the light blue finish aluminum models.

To get an idea of public reaction to the Kennedy Stowaway's obviously different design and its attractive light blue color, FWFT&T arranged for a week's display of a TC20-AL listing among five rival national brand products. Comments were not

considered; instead, the test was based on a count of the number of persons who voluntarily stopped and examined the Kennedy Stowaway model as either sole or first tackle box of attention. The results showed a decided interest preference for the Kennedy Stowaway, drawer-type box; it was opened and examined more times than all of the displayed rival boxes combined.

The Kennedy Manufacturing Company, Van Wert, Ohio, manufacturer of the Stowaway model tackle box identifies its product by the name "Kennedy" written in white script in the lower left-hand corner of the Stowaway's top—which is an added feature if your name also happens to be Kennedy!

Prices range from \$14.95 to \$21.95, the rustless aluminum listings being more expensive than the steel.

If there's a better tackle box on the market for the money than the Kennedy Stowaway, FWFT&T is yet to find it.



READERS of this section have been asking for a report on a quality, reasonably priced, roomy and easily transported tent for use on weekend camping trips by outdoor-minded twosomes or small families.

FWFT&T likes and recommends the Sears, Roebuck and Company distributed umbrella tents, catalog numbers 6KT7720L and 6KT-7721L of your choice of 9 1/2x9 1/2 ft. or 9 1/2x11 1/2 ft. base size.

The Sears' listings, identical except for overall base size, have many features that make them outstanding buys at their respective catalog prices of \$62.80 and \$69.90.

Self-adjusting, all-aluminum frame designs spread the tents for maximum usable interior space, but distribute fabric strain among several supporting spreader arms, thereby eliminating most rips and tears that might occur as a result of weather changes, and the need for adjustments after final erection.

Roof and walls of each size tent are of high count 72x60 tent drill that weighs 7.68 ounces per square yard. The full sewn-in floor, which helps keep out dirt and insects, is of 7 1/2 ounce duck. All fabrics are water repellent and mildew retardant treated, and are of forest green color.

Each model has three nylon screen windows with zipper-closing flaps for bad weather protection, and the front door riser, also made of nylon screen, zips closed from inside or out and snaps at its bottom to a nine-inch door riser. An extra band under the door has center snaps to hold the sides tight.

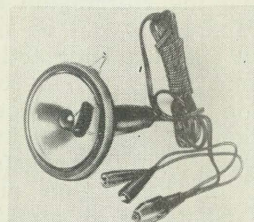
The wide door canopy is supported by friction-locking aluminum poles, extends out 6 feet and is 4 3/4 feet wide.

All poles, ropes and needed tent stakes are included.

The roofed door area can be made into an extra, enclosed room by purchasing matching curtains (catalog numbers 6K07722 and

6K7723) that snap inside the canopy valance, to overlap and tie at tent sides.

An umbrella type tent is one of the most practical and roomy tent styles available, and the Sears' catalog listings combine this desirable shape with features and quality materials that make them especially worthy of consideration by prospective tent purchasers.



ONE of the most useful accessories a car owner can have is a powerful spotlight that can be adjusted and focused to throw an illuminating beam from any angle and for a considerable distance.

Except for the more expensive car models, or where individual car owners have made special installations, most new cars do not have all-angle spotlights as standard equipment.

Truly outstanding in its field—in the opinion of FWFT&T—is the portable and powerful, but inexpensive, Tod-Lite that operates either from car battery terminals or through the car's cigarette lighter socket.

Product of Tod-Lite, Inc., 3401 N. W. 10th Street, Oklahoma City 7, Oklahoma, and retailing for \$5.95, the Tod-Lite develops 50,000 candle power to project a mile-long beam of surprising brightness. A ten foot extension cord permits use from either side and from front or back end of a car, at any desired angle. Sportsmen will find the Tod-Lite very useful afield as well as a most practical light during moments of emergency on the highway.

Despite its low price, there is nothing cheap about the construction and assembly of the Tod-Lite. The light's housing is of heavy rubber and the lens and bulb are of G. E. manufacture and sealed beam type. The unit is lightweight, cannot corrode and, when used with a wood holder as a night fishing light, will float if dropped overboard. The wood float accessory permits floating the light right at surface level, thereby eliminating the usual bug-attracting nuisance of an ordinary fishing light and putting light where it is most fish-attracting—in the water. (The Nite-Fisher accessory adds \$1.95 to the basic unit's cost. Suction cup brackets, to hold a Tod-Lite stationary on flat surfaces, are 75c) When desired, the Tod-Lite can even be safely submerged for either short or prolonged periods of use.

The Tod-Lite's flexible, high-quality rubber casing was designed for quick bulb changes. The standard beam light is just "popped out" and a fog light, flood light bulb or red emergency light bulb is just "popped in".

Besides the auto model, the Tod-Lite can be had to give operation from a standard 6-volt battery.

FWFT&T believes that FLORIDA WILDLIFE readers will find many uses for the convenient and versatile Tod-Lite, and recommends it with every confidence in its field performance.

SALT WATER AWARDS

(Continued from Page 26)

presentations before social and civic groups (all in the interest of salt water conservation).

4. Knowledge.

- (a.) Candidate must be able to demonstrate a familiarity with the salt water of Florida, the indigenous animals and plants, and conservation problems relating to each.

5. Results obtained.

- (a.) Projects completed. These may be actual conservation activities such as the raising of sea turtles.
- (b.) Action taken by responsible agency or groups as a result of activities of candidate. This may be legislation passed, deleterious situation remedied privately, or other positive action taken, totally or in part due to efforts and instigation of honoree.

6. Educational activities.

- (a.) Sponsorship of clubs, projects and activities such as scouts and school groups.
- (b.) Working with other groups on hikes, nature study instruction in recreational programs, etc.
- (c.) Preparation of instructional and educational material for use in schools and organizations.

NOTE: Communications concerning Salt Water Conservation Program should be directed to Ernest Mitts, Director, Salt Water Conservation Commission, Tallahassee, Fla.

FORESTRY AWARDS

(Continued from Page 27)

FIELDS OF ACTIVITY TO BE CONSIDERED

— Since forest conservation embraces many different phases of endeavor, the awards may be presented in recognition for services performed in one activity or for a number of activities. The list of activities which follows is presented as a guide, but if, in the Judges' opinion, some activity not listed here has resulted in an outstanding contribution toward forest conservation, then due consideration will be given to such an activity.

FIELDS OF ACTIVITY TO BE CONSIDERED

1. FOREST MANAGEMENT

Activity in this field requires that the work be widely recognized and influential in bringing

about better forest management over a large area.

A. REFORESTATION — Planting commercially important tree species, example — Slash Pine. Also establishment of private seedling nurseries and production of tree seed crops.

B. PRE-COMMERCIAL THININGS — To allow maximum growth of crowded stands of young timber.

C. SELECTIVE CUTTING — Weeding out insect infested, diseased, poorly formed, slow growing, and crowded trees for maximum timber production.

D. PRUNING — For quality timber.

E. NAVAL STORES — Selective and improved cupping of gum producing tree species (longleaf and slash pine) for production of turpentine, rosin and by-products.

2. EDUCATION

Education work which is widely recognized and influential in bringing about better forest conservation.

A. MASS DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION — Original articles, television appearances, and radio programs designed to influence forest conservation and especially forest fire prevention.

B. YOUTH EDUCATION — Working with groups such as schools, FFA, 4-H, Girl and Boy Scouts to educate future citizens in forest conservation.

C. ADULT EDUCATION — Programs for groups such as Garden Clubs, Women's Clubs, and Civic Clubs to promote forest fire prevention either by itself or as a result of a broader ap-

proach through forest conservation programs.

D. VISUAL EDUCATION — Production of original works in exhibits, signs, film slides, and motion pictures designed to promote forest conservation.

3. LEGISLATION, LAW ENFORCEMENT, JUDICIAL

Coming under this category are legislators, judges, attorneys, peace officers, and private investigators who, in the opinion of the Judges, have contributed outstanding service to forest conservation.

A. FOREST LEGISLATION — Originating and promoting good forest legislation for any and all activities falling under forest conservation.

B. LAW ENFORCEMENT — Accumulation of evidence leading to arrest and conviction for violations of forest conservation laws.

C. JUDICIAL — Presentation and judicial procedure of cases involving forest conservation.

4. RESEARCH AND INVENTION

Responsibility for original discoveries which expand forest conservation in Florida.

A. RESEARCH — Discoveries which appreciably add to the general knowledge of forestry.

B. INVENTION — Development of new processes which result in better production, and utilization of forest products.

JUDGES AND JUDGING — Judges for this award shall consist of persons or organizational representatives as listed in the over-all Sportsmen's Clubs Conservation Awards Program. ●

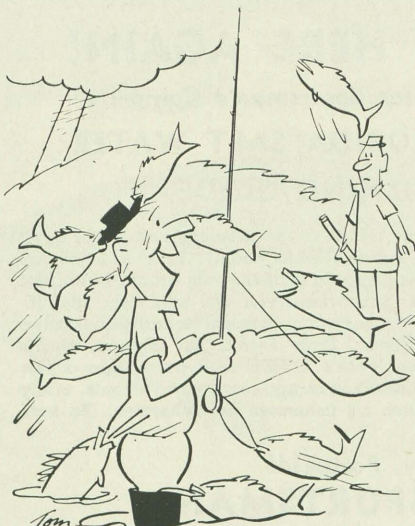
PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

(Continued from Page 38)

Other major division prize winners in FLORIDA WILDLIFE's Junior Wildlife Photo Contest are: Laurence Fitzgerald, Tampa Florida and Barbara Ashworth, Miami, Florida.

Laurence received a Ply-Flex Fishing Rod, Palco Mess Kit, Keiding Bait Bucket, Gladding Spinning Line, Sunset Line Dressing, Shell-O-Matic Cartridge Dispenser, Squacky Squirrel Call, Fisherman's Handbook, and Assorted Fishing Tackle.

Barbara's prizes include a Ply-Flex Casting Rod, Palco Canteen, Palco Mess Kit, Keiding Bait Bucket, Gladding Spinning Line, Sunset Line Dressing, Shell-O-Matic Cartridge Dispenser, Squacky Squirrel Call, Fisherman's Handbook, and Assorted Fishing Tackle. ●



"This is the spot I was telling you about."



AERIAL APPLICATION of a complete fertilizer to forest trees has been made at the Rutgers University Dairy Research Farm by the Rutgers Forestry Department and Nitrogen Division, Allied Chemical & Dye Corporation. It is believed to be the first such application ever made.

The fertilizer was spread over an 11-acre stand of red pine.

The purpose of the experiment is to improve the growth of the 28-year-old trees that are growing slowly because of low fertility soil, according to John Andresen of the State University Forestry Department.

Fertilizing of trees to get a greater volume of wood quicker is an entirely new concept in the U. S., al-

though it has been practiced for some time in Europe where there has been a shortage of wood for centuries.

Recent tests of fertilizing trees have indicated increases in growth ranging from 40 to 65 percent. Current, larger-scale work is directed toward improvement of the fertilizing technique, which in practice could lead to more abundant, cheaper wood for the pulp and paper industries, continues the Rutgers forester.

The fertilizer applied at Beemerville was a standard agricultural material with an analysis of 12 percent nitrogen, 12 percent phosphorus and 12 percent potash, the three primary plant foods. A crop-dusting Stearman airplane operated by Cherry Dusting Service of Pemberton applied the material at the rate of 400 pounds an acre in a spreading time of 6 minutes.

Measurements of the fertilized trees will be made after each growing season to determine the extent of their response to the fertilizer. Other experiments have shown that well fertilized trees are greener, have longer needles and are more healthy in general than trees growing without sufficient plant food.

Recently expanded pulp and paper production facilities are expected to put an even heavier drain on the Southeastern pine forests which now provide the bulk of pulpwood. Fertilization of these stands is expected to provide the key to greater volume as it did to agricultural crop production.

The Beemerville tests showed that forests inaccessible to ground travel may now be fertilized by airplane. As plant foods are applied and tree and ground cover growth increases, there will be improvement and conservation of forest soils, and food and cover for wildlife will be increased . . . good news for hunters.

DOG CHATTER

(Continued from Page 41)

clear tenor, and they seemed able to present any song, popular or classical that was called for.

The agent was naturally enthusiastic and agreed to book the act. Then the man asked for an advance for new clothes and "eating money",

which the agent willingly advanced and additionally offered the loan of his car to get to a club date that very night.

The man was extremely grateful and left with many words of appreciation. However, ten minutes later he was back, with hanging head.

"You have been so nice to me," he said, "I just can't take advantage

of you. I have a confession to make. My act is a phony. The monkey doesn't really sing. The dog is a ventriloquist."

In Haverhill, Mass., a faithful seeing eye dog held off two policemen when they attempted to take his ailing mistress to an ambulance. The dog sat at the bedside of blind Mrs. Shirley Demers growling and showing his teeth until the policemen backed off. Finally, Mrs. Demers summoned a neighbor known to the dog who was able to pacify him while she was carried out.

* * *

In New York City, the American Kennel Club announced that during the first 11 months of 1955 there had been a 9 per cent increase in registrations over the similar period for the previous year.

Whether this increase indicates that the dog population continues to grow or whether it only indicates that more people are registering their dogs, no one really knows. However, from the fact that dog food manufacturers are also having their biggest year it can be presumed that the total dog population keeps right on going up.

FISHERMEN! IT'S HERE AGAIN!



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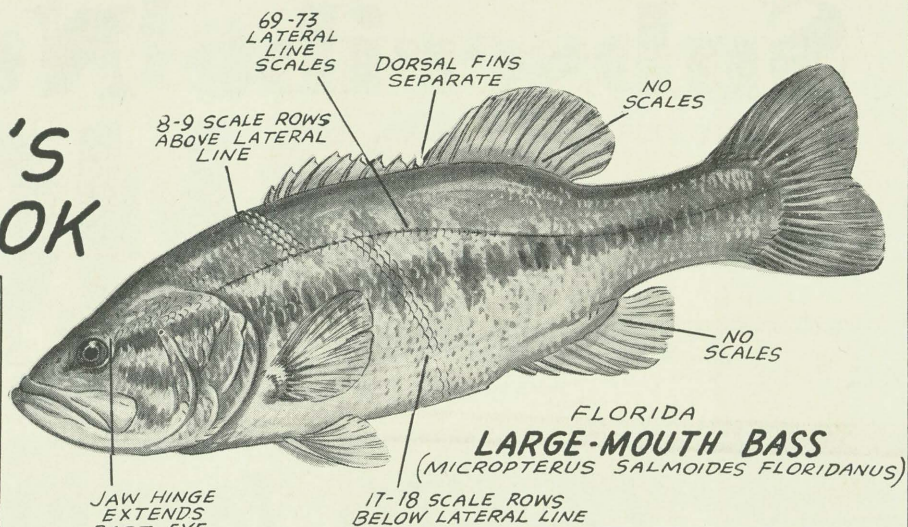
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FLORIDA WILDLIFE'S SCRAPBOOK

ALTHOUGH FISHERMEN OFTEN REPORT CATCHING THEM - FLORIDA FISH BIOLOGISTS GENERALLY AGREE THAT THE SMALL-MOUTH BASS IS NOT FOUND IN FLORIDA WATERS - THE FOLLOWING DRAWINGS AND INFORMATION ARE OFFERED AS AN AID TO IDENTIFICATION OF THE KINDS OF BASS FOUND IN THE LAKES, RIVERS AND SPRINGS OF FLORIDA.



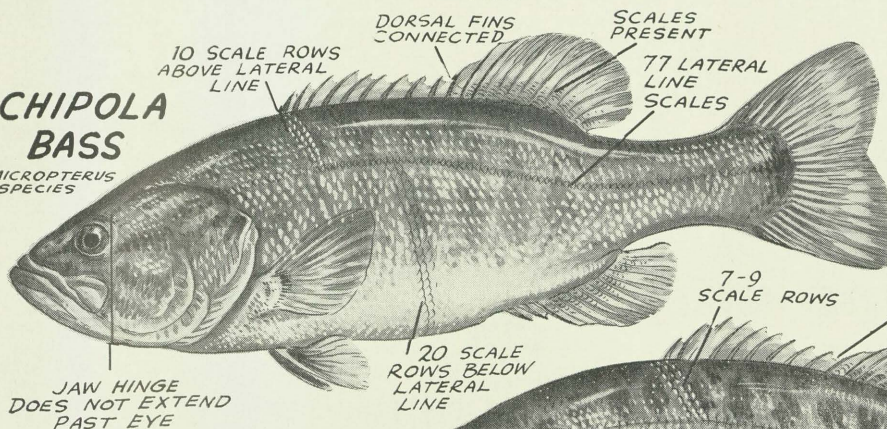
**FLORIDA
LARGE-MOUTH BASS**
(*MICROPTERUS SALMOIDES FLORIDANUS*)

LARGE-MOUTH - FOUND IN LAKES, PONDS, STREAMS AND MARSHES THROUGHOUT FLORIDA - WEIGHTS UP TO 15 LBS.

CHIPOLA BASS - FOUND IN THE CHIPOLA RIVER SYSTEM OF NW FLORIDA - LIKES SWIFT FLOWING WATER - WEIGHTS TO 2 1/2 LBS.

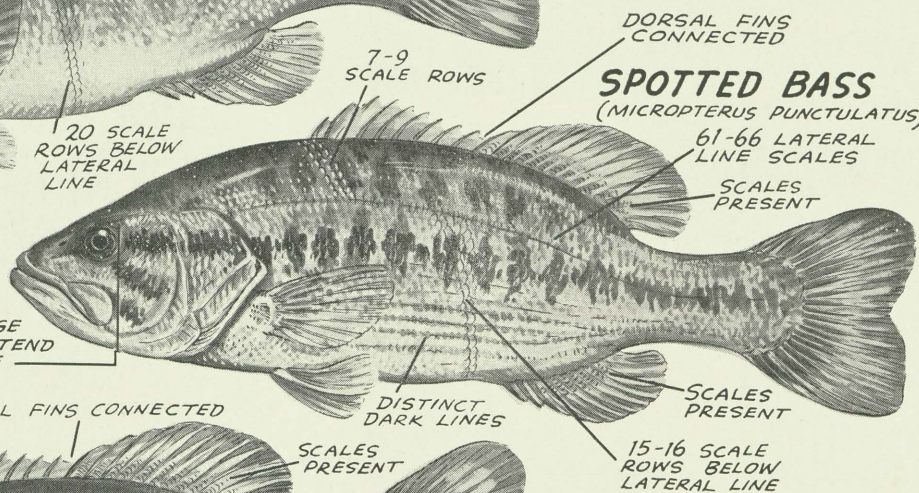
**CHIPOLA
BASS**

MICROPTERUS SPECIES



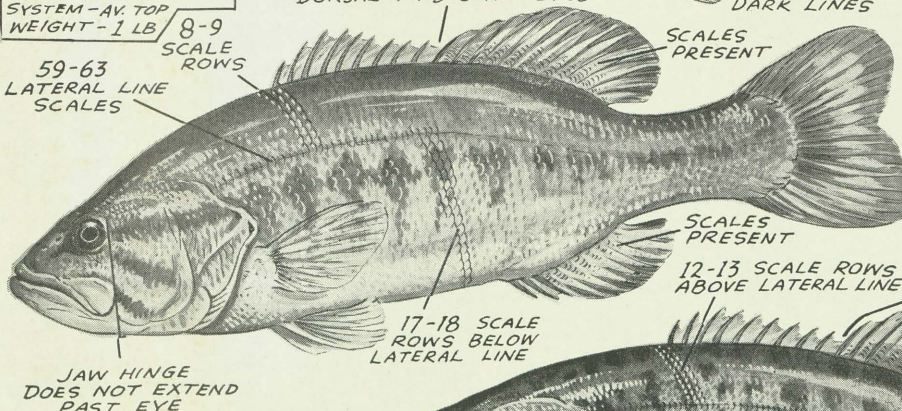
SPOTTED BASS - FOUND IN THE APPALACHICOLA RIVER - WEIGHTS UP TO 4 LBS.

JAW HINGE DOES NOT EXTEND PAST EYE



SPOTTED BASS
(*MICROPTERUS PUNCTULATUS*)

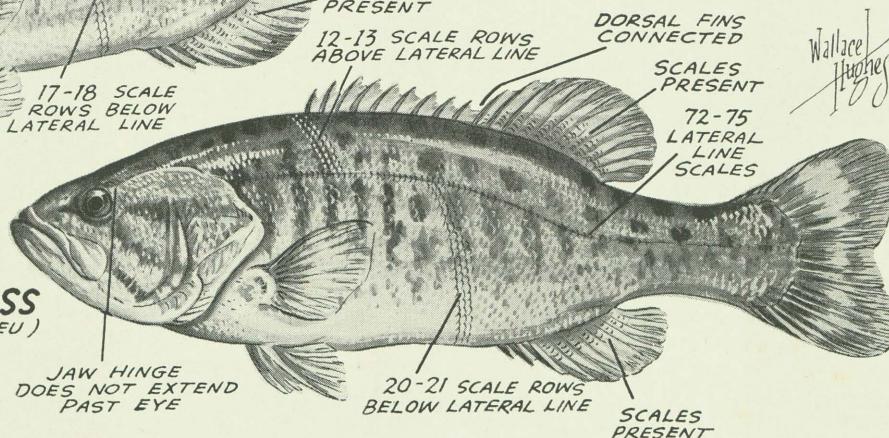
SUWANNEE BASS - FOUND IN THE SUWANNEE RIVER SYSTEM - AV. TOP WEIGHT - 1 LB.



**SUWANNEE
BASS**
(*MICROPTERUS NOTIUS*)

SMALL-MOUTH BASS
(*MICROPTERUS DOLOMIEU*)

SHOWN HERE FOR COMPARISON WITH THE OTHER SPECIES OF BASS



Wallace Hughes

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